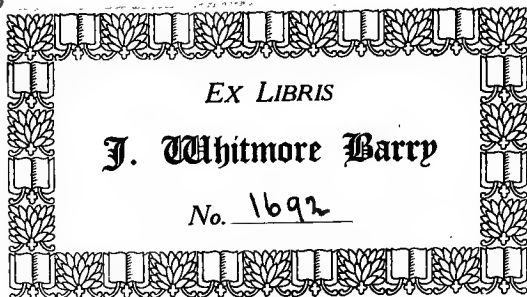


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FIVE UNPRACTICAL PLAYS



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BY

KENNETH WEEKS

AUTHOR OF

"DRIFTWOOD," "THE VICTORY OF SEDAN"
"ESAU AND THE BEACON," ETC.

LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN & COMPANY, LTD.

44 & 45 RATHBONE PLACE

1913

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At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

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SUZANNA
AND . . . THE ELDERS

A VAUDEVILLE IN THREE ACTS
WITH MUSIC

TO
MY MOTHER

IN THE PLAY

HALLOWALL PITTS, President of the Society of Elders.

ABIGAIL PITTS, his wife.

FAITH PITTS, their daughter.

GAULBERT ORSON, composer of "Suzanna."

ROBERT SEVENDER, his friend.

DEVALOISE ORCHARD, an actress, creator of the rôle of
Suzanna.

IPHEGENIA MACDOUGAL }
SARCOPHAGUS MACDOUGAL } Greek dancers.

VALENTINE ORMONT.

SMITH, an inventor.

PLUM, a servant.

1ST ELDER.

2ND ELDER.

3RD ELDER.

4TH ELDER.

5TH ELDER.

A Head Waiter.

A Sergeant of Police.

Members of the Society of Elders, of the Ancient and
Honourable Artillery, and of the press; waiters, police-
men, an orchestra of Tziganes, a boy of the Macdougals,
and the public.

ACT I

The office of the President of the Society of Elders in
Hallowall Pitts' house on Beacon Street.

ACT II

The first performance of "Suzanna" in the Wallis Street
theatre.

ACT III

The grill-room in the American House.

*The vaudeville begins at four o'clock in the evening and ends at
one o'clock the morning following of a day in the fall of
1913, at Boston.*

SUZANNA

AND . . . THE ELDERS

ACT I

THE office of the President of the Society of Elders in Hallowall Pitts' house is an imposing hall of the most extravagant Elizabethan era. Its ancient carvings, columns, and panels are dark with age and deep with finish, for to be worthy of so noble an office the room was taken from an old Welsh manor. The left-hand wall contains in the foreground a large door framed by rich designs and incorporated with the chimney-piece which occupies the rest of the space. This chimney is of most fantastical form; its grotesque masses are touched with colour and in its centre are the arms of the family which built it. The fireplace is enormous, and the logs which now burn in it are trunks of trees. The rear wall is composed of three parts: a doorway in two divisions and on either side of it a flat wall space covered with wainscoting and hung each with a large tapestry. The doorway is approached by two steps and it runs along one-half of the width of the wall. The doors are heavily carved. In the middle of the right-hand wall is a small door; the remaining space is simply wainscoted, but a large painting hangs over the door. The ceiling is of plaster worked into a pattern of intricately designed mouldings such as were common in England in the seventeenth century.

When the doors in the rear wall are open, another room is seen, in which is a long table surrounded by chairs. This

is the actual meeting room of the Society. The wall of it which is visible is opened by arched windows. Before the fireplace in the office is a sofa behind which stands a table with lamps, books, &c., upon it. In the right-hand corner is a grand piano, and on the nearer side of the little door is a tremendous desk and an arm-chair. The desk is extravagantly fitted and is littered with papers; before it is a chair and there are others about the large table. On the floor are a Turkish rug and a tiger skin.

It is four o'clock in the afternoon. Behind the closed doors is going on a meeting of the Society.

SCENE I

HALLOWALL *is walking back and forth impatiently,*
and GAULBERT *is sitting with the partition of*
“*Suzanna*” *on his knees.*

HALLOWALL. No, no, no. Impossible, quite impossible.

GAULBERT. But it is too late! The rehearsals are over, the first representation is billed for to-night! It cannot be stopped.

HALLOWALL. It must not take place.

GAULBERT. The seats are sold and the company is paid. If you only knew how I have struggled to train the orchestra! Besides that, my entire future, as well as my present fortune, depend upon this performance. It will cause a scandal to withdraw the piece at this hour. My dear Mr. Pitts, you surely cannot exercise your power so tyrannically as this. If you had spoken sooner something

might have been done, but now it is really too late ; the public are impatient to see " Suzanna "—everything is favourable except your prejudice. I assure you that it will not be a service to the city to censure my opera.

HALLOWALL. I cannot allow your piece to appear in Boston, Mr. Orson. That is my last word.

GAULBERT. It is customary to give one representation of a play before stopping it.

HALLOWALL. For unknown ones ; yours, unfortunately, is only too notorious.

GAULBERT. Have you ever seen it ?

HALLOWALL. Certainly not.

GAULBERT. Have you ever read the poem or heard the music ?

HALLOWALL. By no means.

GAULBERT. Then how can you condemn it ?

HALLOWALL. By its reputation. The dance alone is sufficient to kill it here. I am resolute, Mr. Orson ; your opera must not be given.

GAULBERT. Let me read some of it to you. You are mistaken in thinking it disagreeable (*he reads at random from the partition*) : " He is like a young horse, he is like the autumn sun floating in the smoke of burning leaves. His cheeks are fresh as the petals of a rose——"

HALLOWALL (*impatiently*). Stop ! I do not want to hear it. I am sorry, sir, that I must disoblige you, but duty to the helpless souls of my children impels me. I affirm again my decision and regret

to be obliged to leave you now to attend a meeting.

GAULBERT. Is there nothing that I can do to persuade you ?

HALLOWALL. I am afraid not. I wish you better fortune elsewhere or with another opera, but "Suzanna" I could never allow to be given in Boston ; never ! *[He goes towards the steps.]*

GAULBERT. May I send the director to talk with you ?

HALLOWALL. I have already seen him ; it is quite useless.

GAULBERT. At least consent to an audition of "Suzanna" with the piano before judging.

HALLOWALL. I really have not the time. I trust to meet you again, Mr. Orson.

[He bows, and opening the door in the rear, goes into the Board-room. The door closes heavily.]

SCENE II

GAULBERT *bows his head and wanders pensively across the room. Then he throws his partition down angrily and shakes his fist at the closed door. His eye falls on the piano ; with sudden inspiration he picks up "Suzanna" and seats himself at the keyboard. He opens the music and accompanies himself as he sings, first gently, but gradually more and more dramatically.*

GAULBERT. "They are soft as the bloom of a budding willow and they lie abandoned in a voluptuous abandonment. Your teeth are as white as the seed of an almond, and your neck no longer moves with the pulsations of your heart like the branches of a tree in the wind.

[The door in the rear is pushed open an inch and several heads are evident. As GAULBERT continues, the door opens little by little altogether, and the members of the Society of Elders crowd in it to hear him sing. They are grotesquely excited.]

"Your eyes gaze at me softly. They are black now, and I can see into the bottom of your soul because there is nothing there but a profound abyss. In the water at the bottom there are dancing a mad company of stars which dance a bacchanale. You did not wish me to look into your eyes, but I have looked. Your eyes are no longer yours, but mine.

[During a phrase by the orchestra GAULBERT looks around and sees the old men. He stops playing and they burst into applause. They run down into the room delightedly.]

1ST ELDER. It is charming! It is lovely!

2ND ELDER. Such purity!

3RD ELDER. I must have that for Minnie.

4TH ELDER. It is so fresh! What were you playing?

GAULBERT. That was a part of "Suzanna."

1ST ELDER. Disgusting !

2ND ELDER. Mercy !

3RD ELDER. An outrage.

HALLOWALL. Was that " Suzanna " ?

GAULBERT. Why not ? You see it is beautiful. I appeal to you all to rejudge it and to sanction the performance for to-night. (*There is a sudden frosty silence.*) Merely one night.

HALLOWALL. Impossible !

1ST ELDER. Decidedly not !

2ND ELDER. It is shocking !

HALLOWALL. Do not insist, Mr. Orson ; I have said once for all that " Suzanna " cannot be given.

GAULBERT. I am in despair.

HALLOWALL. I am sorry. I repeat myself in saying that I hope to see you again with a more playable work.

[*He accompanies GAULBERT to the door on the left.*

GAULBERT. If you change your mind you can always let me know.

HALLOWALL. That will not be ; good-bye, sir.

[*He opens the door and GAULBERT goes out dejectedly ; he closes it and returns toward the others.*

SCENE III

1ST ELDER. Don't you think, Pitts, that we might authorise one performance of " Suzanna " ? Perhaps if we saw it we might approve of it.

2ND ELDER. It is no doubt primitive; but, with modifications, you know——

HALLOWALL. The piece is in bad odour; the dance, under any conditions, is repulsive, and even if the rest could be rearranged, its character is not one suitable for our city.

1ST ELDER. If it were well given——

2ND ELDER. So that we could see it; after that——

HALLOWALL. I am convinced that it is not to be tolerated. We have already given our orders.

3RD ELDER. Pitts is right; we ought not to favour decadent artists.

1ST ELDER. Decadent! You know nothing about it; I have read "Suzanna." (*Exclamations of horror.*) And I find that Orson has a creditable end in view. He has well studied a real phase of human character and has added to it an original interpretation through his music.

HALLOWALL. Perhaps; but I disapprove of the phase he has studied.

2ND ELDER. No one ought to disapprove of what is sound.

HALLOWALL. My reasons are not prudish: they are scientific. You are all excited by his music. Well, it is exactly for that reason that I condemn "Suzanna."

1ST ELDER. I do not understand.

HALLOWALL. Let me explain. There is a normal pulse, is there not?

1ST ELDER. For the heart ?

HALLOWALL. Yes ; and there is a normal length of life. It is obvious that if the pulse is quickened, the length of life is shortened. Now all stimulants make the heart beat too rapidly ; it is for this reason that men who use them die young—their allowance of heart beats becomes exhausted. My moral duties urge me to provide long lives for my race : hence my enmity to stimulants of all sorts. I don't want them to live too rapidly. " Suzanna " is exciting ; it wastes the heart. [*He stops energetically.*]

1ST ELDER. I disagree. All exercise of the heart strengthens it ; " Suzanna " lengthens life.

3RD ELDER. You are all too theoretical. The immediate results of such an opera are more important ; the thing is simply immoral and it will breed immorality.

2ND ELDER. It is not immoral ; you might as well say that biology or botany are immoral. Orson's opera is a popular text-book.

4TH ELDER. There are certain things the people ought not to study.

1ST ELDER. We are an enlightened state. Truth cannot harm us.

5TH ELDER. Pitts is more nearly right. The energy put into seeing " Suzanna " is equal to that spent in living the thing really. Now we live enough. To double our lives artificially actually halves them.

1ST ELDER. I am sure I should live longer from

seeing "Suzanna." It would, in fact, let me live without the fatigue of living; it would double my life.

3RD ELDER. If we favour the opera we burden our children with the expense of it. Then, too, if it lengthens or shortens our lives, it is not fair to our inheritors.

4TH ELDER. I don't think we ought to meddle with anything credited with such powers. God ordains the space of our lives and to consciously frustrate Him is a sacrilege.

1ST ELDER. God has nothing to do with it. He can't bother about such small matters as our lives.

5TH ELDER. There you are quite wrong; God governs even the most trivial things.

1ST ELDER. Then why did He allow "Suzanna" to be written?

3RD ELDER. That proves that the devil exists.

2ND ELDER. There is no devil; that is a very old-fashioned idea.

3RD ELDER. Then how do you account for evil?

2ND ELDER. Evil is man's disregard of God.

4TH ELDER. Then we must not disregard Him; therefore, "Suzanna" must not be played.

1ST ELDER. Who says that God censured "Suzanna"?

5TH ELDER. He could not approve of it.

2ND ELDER. How do you know?

5TH ELDER. Pitts doesn't.

1ST ELDER. I do ; my opinion is as much God's as is Pitts'.

5TH ELDER. I find no instance in the Old Testament of the deities ever favouring operatic performances. In the Book of Job, in fact, there are a dozen commandments against them.

4TH ELDER. In the Koran, too, they are forbidden.

1ST ELDER. The Koran is a heathen book ; if it condemns operas, then operas are good. You know very well that the persecutions of the pagans were a scourge to the early Christians.

5TH ELDER. On the contrary ; there are several wise sayings in the Koran.

2ND ELDER. That comes of being a Baptist.

5TH ELDER. Oh—you are a High Church Episcopalian. That explains your approval of the opera.

2ND ELDER. My Church is nearer the truth than yours.

5TH ELDER. Nearer the Westminster, you mean.

2ND ELDER. Sir !

HALLOWALL. Gentlemen ! This is not a question of religion ! When you think that our children—my nephew Emerson, his sister Hepzibah—might pass the doors behind which this opera was being played on their way to read Schopenhauer and Swedenborg in the library : imagine the influence it might have on these marvellous young minds. Who could soar to the realms of Nietzsche or of Haeckel feeling the corporeal work so near ?

4TH ELDER. In some foreign cities I have seen nude statues in the public places.

HALLOWALL. We are the guardians of the public morals ! Let us take care that this brazen effrontery is foiled ! Let us see that not one step of the wicked dance is ever performed !

SCENE IV

As he speaks, the door on the left opens and PLUM comes in with his arms full of photographs.

GAULBERT follows him.

HALLOWALL. What does this mean ? I have nothing more to say to you, Orson.

[PLUM lays the photographs on the table and goes out.]

GAULBERT. These, my dear Mr. Pitts, are the number and quality of the women who are performing a degraded version of my dance every night in Boston. Supposing you approved of them as you permit their dancing, I imagined it would please you to see their pictures. I will not bore you with my opera ; even my music is avoided by these artists.

[The Elders examine the photographs.]

HALLOWALL. These women are dancing in Boston ? All of them ?

GAULBERT. Yes. Why do you allow them to do this nightly and still forbid the performance of " Suzanna " ?

HALLOWALL. They shall dance no more ; I shall not allow them to dance anywhere in Boston. I shall have them sent away. I did not know about them.

GAULBERT. Will you listen to me about " Suzanna " ?

HALLOWALL (*to the Elders*). My friends, our meeting may now adjourn. I shall attend to the matter of " Suzanna " according to our decision.

[The Elders bow and retire into the meeting room silently, closing the doors after them.]

SCENE V

HALLOWALL. They shall be stopped, I promise you that, Mr. Orson. I shall protect you.

GAULBERT. Then you will allow me to give " Suzanna " to-night ?

HALLOWALL. The most I can do is to censure these dancers. Otherwise nothing is changed.

GAULBERT. How can you be so unjust ? What difference can one performance of " Suzanna " make when these vulgar shows have gone on indefinitely ? I thought surely you would be forced to favour me.

HALLOWALL. I am never forced, Mr. Orson. I absolutely forbid " Suzanna," the more so on account of these dreadful women.

GAULBERT. There is nothing to prevent me from raising a scandal about the immunity these dreadful women have enjoyed.

HALLOWALL. I do not fear it, and I have not the time to discuss the thing. Please be so good as to depart, and do not attempt another such stroke.

GAULBERT. I will win your consent before night!

HALLOWALL. It is useless.

[*He shows GAULBERT to the door on the left.*

GAULBERT. I mean it; I will not only play "Suzanna" to-night, but you shall be there.

[HALLOWALL *laughs* and GAULBERT *goes out*.

SCENE VI

As GAULBERT leaves he runs into the MACDOUGALS, who enter in full Greek costume.

HALLOWALL. Well, well, well. Sarcophagus! And Iphegenia! Where did you come from?

IPHEGENIA. My dear Hallowall! We thought to surprise you.

SARCOPHAGUS. We have come to give a special evening of dances in Boston.

[HALLOWALL *embraces them*.

HALLOWALL. We didn't expect you until next week.

IPHEGENIA. We were begged to appear to-night at the Ladies' Industrial Union in our new Eleusinian dances. They take place at midnight.

HALLOWALL. How original!

SARCOPHAGUS. Not at all. Everything about them is at least 2200 years old. The music is

played on Pythagoras' lyre—one string, you see. (*He produces the instrument in question.*) The only other accessories are a tripod and a crevice.

HALLOWALL. But why at midnight?

SARCOPHAGUS. We discovered that the priestess of Ceres was always inspired at midnight.

HALLOWALL. Oh! Well, I am glad to see you. Your dances are so uplifting. Such a contrast as they make to these degenerate Russian orgies and Assyrian bacchanales. (*Lifting his hands.*) I have had a frightful time about "Suzanna."

BOTH MACDOUGALS. No! How shocking.

HALLOWALL. It shall not be acted here.

IPHEGENIA. I should hope not; one cannot afford to lose all modesty.

HALLOWALL. Well, well. Abigail will order tea for you. I must clear up my desk—overwhelmed with work!

SARCOPHAGUS. Do not let us bother you.

HALLOWALL. I shall be with you presently. You are, of course, going to stay with us.

IPHEGENIA. We should be delighted.

HALLOWALL. Good.

[*The MACDOUGALS go out to the right.*]

SCENE VII

HALLOWALL *sits down at his desk and burrows about among the papers hopelessly.* PLUM *enters.*

PLUM. There is an artist to see you, sir.

HALLOWALL. These are not my hours. What artist? Not Orson?

PLUM. No, sir; just an artist named Smith.

HALLOWALL. Well, I can't see him. (*He turns to his papers again, but at the sight of them changes his mind.*) Show him in.

PLUM. Here he is, sir.

[*PLUM goes out as a young fellow enters who carries a curious box. HALLOWALL busies himself with sorting out papers. The man coughs. HALLOWALL pays no attention to him. The man peers over the desk and discovers him.*]

HALLOWALL. What is it?

SMITH. I have brought an invention of mine for your judgment. I want to introduce it in Boston.

HALLOWALL (*coming out from behind the desk*). What is it?

SMITH (*standing the box on a chair*). It is an odourphone.

HALLOWALL. A what?

SMITH. An odourphone.

HALLOWALL. What is that?

SMITH. It is an instrument which is designed to give medium for the art of smells. Sound, colour, form, and taste have all been highly developed by music, painting, sculpture, and the kitchen. Scent alone has never been taken up. By my new theory and this instrument an entirely new art has been discovered. The others have gone to seed; in

this lies the future. You cannot conceive of the importance it has. That is why I came to you, not only for you to back it with your influence, but also to ask you to push it financially.

HALLOWALL. You astound me ; I do not understand.

SMITH. Let me demonstrate it to you. Will you sit down ?

[HALLOWALL *sits down in a chair* and SMITH *pulls up a small table on which he places the odourphone at a level with HALLOWALL's head.*

It works exactly according to the same laws as does music. You see, there is a keyboard (*he opens the box*), and the compositions are transcribed to paper by means of signs resembling musical annotation. I shall play you a phantasy called "The Haunted Rocquefort." This quaint ballad after Goethe recounts the wanderings of a bewitched cheese across the garden and of its adventures with its enemies. It is my fifteenth composition for the odourphone. The first movement is largo, and the main theme is introduced by wind instruments, piano. Then the strings take up the "Haunted" motive in triplets, developing it by the addition of the "Fate" phrase with the horns to a more and more animated semi-climax ; there is a sudden crash and a long pause, in which the main theme is crushed to diminished thirteenths in 9/12 time.

HALLOWALL. Begin, begin.

[SMITH *seats himself at the keyboard and begins to play.* HALLOWALL *receives the first whiffs of the phantasy and, closing his eyes, leans back smiling.* SMITH *fingers more temperamentally and HALLOWALL's joy increases; he breathes in deeply of the smells.* *The more SMITH works himself up the more ecstatic becomes HALLOWALL.*

HALLOWALL (*suddenly*). That's the Rocquefort!

SMITH. Only an indication of it.

[*He continues. The odours are evidently of a superb dinner where priceless wines and exquisite cooking are supplemented by roses and perfumed ladies.*

HALLOWALL (*starting*). Those are the haunted triplets—what are they?

SMITH. Paramaceans.

[HALLOWALL *shivers and takes an interest in the development of the ballad. The perfumes have been threaded with an unpleasant smell.* SMITH *continues to work himself up.*

HALLOWALL (*violently and startingly*). Good Lord! What is that?

SMITH. That is the "Fate" theme. It is rats.

[HALLOWALL *grows uneasy as the phantasy approaches the semi-climax. The Rocquefort has become thoroughly haunted by this time and the dinner party is ended.*

Following a frenzy of the artist comes the crash in the phantasy. HALLOWALL jumps up madly.

HALLOWALL. Stop, stop, enough ! I can't stand that smell.

[The artist, lost in his inspiration, goes on with the diminished thirteenth.

Do you hear ? I have smelled enough.

[He drags SMITH away from the box.

SMITH. You are barbarous ! It goes on magnificently into the cabbage plot and the onions before meeting the real rats.

HALLOWALL. You are degenerate. Why not keep on with the lovely ideas at the beginning ?

SMITH. I do not compose for prudes.

HALLOWALL. Does anyone like cabbage ? *(The artist is offended.)* Never mind ! Your instrument is tremendous. I want you to compose a wine song for me—beginning with cocktails and ending with Benedictine.

SMITH. Then you will protect me ?

HALLOWALL. Most surely. You are the greatest inventor of the age. Only we must restrict your subject matter. Come and play a hymn on the Dorian scale for the Macdougals. After tea we will talk of practical matters.

SMITH. I am overjoyed !

[They go out by the door on the right, carrying the odourphone with them.

SCENE VIII

GAULBERT *and* ROBERT *come in from the left.*

GAULBERT. I am in the devil of a hole, Bob.

ROBERT. Can I help ?

[They light cigarettes and sit down.]

GAULBERT. You see my opera "Suzanna," which came out in Paris, was accepted here by Axestein. For months I have been rehearsing it, training the orchestra and singers, attending to the scenery even, and taking the tenor's rôle myself. Axestein has gone to great expense, and now, six hours before the first performance, Pitts censures it. The thing has got to be played. I am ruined if it is not. I have tried every argument without success. What do you advise ?

ROBERT. Humph ! There's no arguing with him. *(A pause.)* We must win by a trick. It interests me, Gaulbert, not only for you, but for me ; you see I have tried to get into the Society of Elders for years.

GAULBERT. You ? Why ?

ROBERT. To see all the things that they censure ! The old dogs see everything—that is half of the game. What they would be ashamed to let people know they had seen, they censure. The stage is awfully dull in Boston. That is why I want to be a watcher if not a warder.

GAULBERT. Clever boy !

ROBERT. Then again, I want to marry Faith, but Pitts won't hear of it.

GAULBERT. Oh !

ROBERT. So that, if we can arrange something to get him in our power, we can dictate to him.

GAULBERT. What do you suggest ?

ROBERT. Wait (*he thinks deeply*). I have it ! Listen—Pitts thinks he has a bass voice ; he adores private theatricals.

GAULBERT. Yes.

ROBERT. What we can do is this : you go ahead and announce your opera for to-night. We will let him think it is cancelled, but otherwise change nothing. We will stay here for tea and get him to sing ; then I will ask him to replace a bass in some charity theatricals that are being given in reality to-night, but in Jordan hall. I shall say that, as " Suzanna " is off, we have taken the Wallis Street theatre. He will jump at it. They are playing " Sara." You get the rôle of your bass and give it to him. He can learn it in an hour. Is it long ?

GAULBERT. Only a few pages ; but my bass ?

ROBERT. Chuck him. Pitts will be so excited that he won't notice anything wrong. The show will go through rippingly, and at the end, when we confront him, he won't be able to say a thing.

GAULBERT. You are a genius. But is this practicable ?

ROBERT. Leave it to me ; one performance of your opera with Pitts in it, will save you. You run

and fetch Devaloise ; say she's your wife. Bring Valentine—we'll pass him off as a younger son of Lord Ormont. Between us, with Faith's aid, we can look after Mrs. Pitts and those Macdougals until the thing is over.

GAULBERT. Are they here ?

ROBERT. I believe so. Lord ! this will be a spree. I can see Mrs. Pitts and Valentine now ! We must compromise her and rout the Macdougals ; they are all enemies to us.

GAULBERT. I might as well risk it.

ROBERT. Of course. Run now and find Devaloise. She will be able to persuade Pitts if I can't. Mrs. Pitts will wipe up the floor for a son of Lord Ormont. Why, the victory is already ours !

GAULBERT. All right. I will come back immediately.

ROBERT. Go along then. [GAULBERT *hurries out*.

SCENE IX

FAITH *comes in from the right*.

FAITH. Hello, Bob ! I'm awfully glad you're here. I couldn't stand those people another minute. The Macdougals are bad enough, but Father has picked up a man with a thing he calls an odourphone.

ROBERT. A what ?

FAITH. A thing that smells. He has been giving us his latest symphony—a Venetian symphony. He

must have been there in summer; and a fugue in four odours. I couldn't wait for the resolution of it.

ROBERT. Are you insane?

FAITH. No, you will smell him soon.

ROBERT. They are coming! Listen, Faith—you know Orson?

FAITH. Of course.

ROBERT. Your Father has forbidden his opera. He is coming here for tea with Devaloise Orchard and a fellow called Valentine Ormont, an ex-police-man of London, whom he is to introduce as a son of Lord Ormont. I am going to get your Father to sing in some private theatricals to-night, but instead we will take him to the Wallis Street theatre. Are you on?

FAITH. Heavens! I think so; what must I do?

ROBERT. Nothing but be tactful. I'll look after you; Valentine, your Mother; Devaloise, your Father. Gaulbert can amuse the Macdougals.

FAITH. But the other man?

ROBERT. He can play his odourphone. Just be on, that's all. I say, Faith, you're great in that gown.

FAITH. I'm glad you like it.

ROBERT. I'm going to speak to your Father again.

FAITH. He is awfully difficult.

ROBERT. May I have that lily?

FAITH. It is for you.

[*She takes a flower from her belt and gives it to*
BOB, *who squeezes her hand. She blushes.*

SCENE X

HALLOWALL, ABIGAIL, *the* MACDOUGALS, and SMITH
come in. PLUM *follows them with a tea-tray*
which he places on a small table before FAITH,
who has installed herself near the fireplace.
The others sit down about her as they talk.

HALLOWALL. Hello, Sevender. You know the
Macdougals. This is a great artist named Smith.

ROBERT. Smith? I know all about him.

[He shakes hands cordially.]

SMITH. You don't say?

ROBERT. It is you who invented the odourphone,
isn't it?

SMITH. None other. But how did you know?

ROBERT. Why, everyone is talking of it. (SMITH
takes his tea genially.) I trust I shall be able to
see you dance, Miss Macdougal.

IPHEGENIA. To-night at twelve at the Ladies'
Industrial Union—wherever that is. Do come;
my new mystery dances.

ROBERT. May I have the honour of escorting you
to the hall if you do not know where it is?

IPHEGENIA. I should be delighted.

ROBERT. I suppose you will go to see the private
theatricals first. They are giving "Sara" for
charity—and, before I forget it, I wish to tell you
all that, as "Suzanna" is not to be given, we have
secured the Wallis Street theatre. I have been

attending to the management of the piece ; it will be well given.

IPHEGENIA. Certainly we will go if it is for charity.

HALLOWALL. What a good idea to have it in the Wallis Street.

ROBERT. Then why cannot we all go together ? I have a box—Mrs. Pitts, Mr. Pitts, let me invite you to see “ Sara,” with the Macdougals and Faith, and Mr. Smith of course. We can all go to the Industrial afterwards.

ABIGAIL. I think that is fine. Eh, Hallowall ?

HALLOWALL. It is very kind of Mr. Sevender. Perhaps he would dine with us ?

ROBERT. Thank you, with pleasure.

FAITH. By the way, isn't Lord Ormont coming to tea ?

ABIGAIL. What ? Lord Ormont ?

ROBERT. Oh, only a younger son. I knew him intimately in England and took the liberty of asking him to call on you. I had forgotten.

ABIGAIL (*touching up her hair*). Well, he's late.

ROBERT. Mr. Orson and his wife are with him.

HALLOWALL. Orson ?

ABIGAIL. Wife ? I didn't know he was married.

ROBERT. Oh, yes.

ABIGAIL. We must ask Lord Ormont to go to the theatre with us to-night. That is, if Mr. Sevender——

ROBERT. I should like nothing better. Not "Lord," however.

ABIGAIL. Faith must be very nice to him. Is he a good match ?

ROBERT. Well, I know nothing of his finances.

HALLOWALL. No, no, of course not.

ABIGAIL. Son of a Lord !

SCENE XI

PLUM enters with a card

ABIGAIL. I am at home, Plum.

[*PLUM withdraws and GAULBERT enters with DEVALOISE and VALENTINE.*

ROBERT. Hello, Ormont (*they shake hands*). This is Mrs. Pitts, Mr. Pitts, Miss Pitts, the Macdougals, and Mr. Smith. Mrs. Pitts—Mrs. Orson.

ABIGAIL. Won't you be comfortable, my Lord ?

[*She offers him the best chair in the room. He takes it.*

GAULBERT. Pardon me, Mrs. Pitts, if I deliver an important paper to Mr. Sevender.

ABIGAIL. Certainly. Oh—er—are you for long in the States, my Lord ?

VALENTINE (*in a pronounced cockney*). Uncertain, ma'am.

GAULBERT. You see he has just finished his course at Christ Church and is travelling. What do you hear from the Prince, Ormont ?

VALENTINE (*laughing broadly*). Only the worst !

GAULBERT. You see, he was a chum of the Prince of Wales.

ABIGAIL. Of course, of course. (*Aside to GAULBERT.*) What a curious accent he has.

GAULBERT. That is the latest fad at Oxford. The Socialist movement is so popular that even the Prince of Wales talks cockney.

ABIGAIL (*with renewed interest in ORMONT*). I hear you are devoted to the poor, my Lord.

VALENTINE. I am one of them, ma'am.

ROBERT (*breaking in*). Oh dear, oh dear ! What shall I do ?

FAITH. What is the matter, Bob ?

ROBERT. Our bass has been taken ill at the last moment, and I do not know what to do.

FAITH. How dreadful. Are there no understudies ?

ROBERT. No, there is no one to replace him.

FAITH. Why couldn't Father help you ?

HALLOWALL. I ? To sing ? What is the part ?

ROBERT. I know you have a splendid voice, Mr. Pitts. Would you be so good ?

HALLOWALL. Why I could never learn the part before the hour.

ROBERT. It is very short, and you could read it from the score. Your position during the opera is one in which the music could not be seen by the public. Do save me !

HALLOWALL. Well, let me see. (*He takes the*

papers BOB *holds out to him.*) Humph! It is a chant really; not difficult.

ROBERT. Not at all,

HALLOWALL. I will look it over.

ROBERT. Will you show Mr. Pitts about it, Devaloise?

[HALLOWALL *goes to the piano with* DEVALOISE. *They begin to study the music.*

ROBERT. I have never been able to see you dance, Miss Macdougall, although I am a fervent admirer of your ideas. Would it be too much to ask you to do some little study for us now?

ABIGAIL. Oh, yes, Iphegenia, and have Sarcophagus play his lyre for you.

IPHEGENIA. A short one, then—if Sarcophagus is not tired.

SARCOPHAGUS. It is for you to say.

IPHEGENIA. Then let us do “The Trance of the Prophetess.”

VALENTINE. Ripping! The dance of the Prophetess.

SARCOPHAGUS. Trance!

VALENTINE. What difference does it make?

[SARCOPHAGUS *tunes his string and begins the music of the dance.*

“The Trance of the Prophetess”

Iphegenia walks twice across the room, turns three times, and then sits down on the floor.

[SARCOPHAGUS *stops.*

ROBERT. Wonderful! But is that all?

VALENTINE. Of course. Don't you see she's in a trance?

[*The others applaud loudly when they realise that the dance is over. IPHEGENIA is still possessed by her inspiration.*]

FAITH. It is surprising to see to what lengths art may be developed.

[*IPHEGENIA rises slowly and exhaustedly.*]

ROBERT. It was beautiful, Miss Macdougall.

ABIGAIL. Now I want Lord Ormont to see the wonderful instrument of Mr. Smith.

SMITH. Ah, yes! May I demonstrate it to his lordship?

VALENTINE. With pleasure.

[*They rise and move to the door.*]

FAITH. You will love it, my lord. [*They go out.*]

SCENE XII

DEVALOISE. Shall we go on?

HALLOWALL. Let me see. Give me the chords of the prelude. (DEVALOISE *plays the opening measures of "Suzanna."* HALLOWALL *sings.*) "Salomé, Mary Salomé! and thou, sweet Mary——"

DEVALOISE (*interrupting*). No, No—"and thou, sweet Mary."

HALLOWALL. "And thou, sweet Mary."

DEVALOISE. Why do you flat "thou"?

HALLOWALL. I didn't.

DEVALOISE. See, it is G natural.

HALLOWALL. Not in my copy.

DEVALOISE (*taking his music*). You coughed on it.

HALLOWALL. Oh, pardon me. (DEVALOISE *resumes*.) "And *thou*, sweet Mary."

DEVALOISE. That is better. Go on.

HALLOWALL. "Blessèd Madeleine, Mother of Charity!"

DEVALOISE. Let us skip to "Surely I hear strange sounds!" The rest goes similarly.

HALLOWALL. "Surely I hear strange sounds! The beating of wings. . . ."

DEVALOISE. You don't make it ecstatic enough. Then, too, it must be plaintive; it must contrast with Sara's first words. Thus: (*she sings*) "He is like a young horse, he is like the autumn sun floating in the smoke of burning leaves. . . ."

HALLOWALL. What? Where have I heard those words before?

DEVALOISE. Haven't you ever seen "Sara"?

HALLOWALL. That is not in "Sara."

DEVALOISE (*impetuously*). Mr. Pitts, why will you not allow "Suzanna" to be played? I assure you you make a mistake.

HALLOWALL. Do not let us discuss it. My duties are beyond my wishes.

DEVALOISE (*winningly*). It would be so easy to allow one night.

HALLOWALL. Not one. (*He smiles at DEVALOISE.*)
I am very sorry, Mrs. Orson.

DEVALOISE (*smiling up at him*). Not one? Just one little night?

HALLOWALL (*embarrassed*). You see—I should like to——

DEVALOISE (*taking his hand*). Mr. Pitts, I am a poor woman who has braved the storms with her husband, and it is wicked to be disappointed at the last minute. I should be eternally grateful to you if you gave us one night, just the tiniest night.

HALLOWALL (*more embarrassed*). You are a very pretty woman, Mrs. Orson.

DEVALOISE. I should always be your friend.

HALLOWALL. You are unfair.

DEVALOISE. One night!

HALLOWALL (*weakening*). I . . .

DEVALOISE. One.

HALLOWALL (*bashfully*). Would you—give me anything I asked in return?

DEVALOISE (*impatiently*). That depends.

[HALLOWALL *leans down and kisses her. She jumps up and slaps his face.*

HALLOWALL. Madam! You have slapped the face of the President of the Society of Elders!

[DEVALOISE *lowers her head in confusion.*

DEVALOISE. I beg your pardon; you surprised me—and then——

HALLOWALL. I am not accustomed to being lightly treated.

DEVALOISE. Do forgive me. I was in the wrong. It was my fault.

HALLOWALL. There, there ; never mind. Let us forget about it.

DEVALOISE (*brightening*). Then you will promise to take the bass's part to-night in "Sara."

HALLOWALL (*very much relieved*). Certainly, certainly. It will give me pleasure. As to "Suzanna"——

DEVALOISE. Oh, let us drop that subject.

HALLOWALL (*gaily*). So much the better. We must work on "Sara." I want to do it well. And, by the way, will you save the front row for the members of the Society of Elders ? I shall notify them to attend, all of them, with the Ancients and Honourables. My family, of course, will be there, and I shall inform the press that they are to write favourable criticisms.

DEVALOISE. Let us apply ourselves. [*She plays.*]

HALLOWALL (*singing*). "Surely I hear strange sounds."

SCENE XIII

Suddenly the little door on the right is thrown open and the MACDOUGALS, ABIGAIL, VALENTINE, FAITH, ROBERT, and GAULBERT rush in in confusion. In full pursuit, with SMITH hanging on to it, is the odourphone.

SMITH. Help, help ! One of the pipes is leaking !
[*A strong odour penetrates the theatre and the curtain falls hurriedly, while the PITTS and their guests flee in disorder, leaving SMITH trying to master his odourphone.*]

END OF ACT I

ACT II

SCENE I

During this Act the actual theatre is supposed to be the Wallis Street theatre, and the audience that which has come to see the first performance of "SUZANNA." It is a few minutes before the commencement, and the orchestra is tuning its instruments. When the house is nearly seated, the entire Society of Elders file in and occupy the front row of the orchestra, which row has naturally been vacant during the first Act. With them are a few members of the Ancient and Honourable Artillery in uniform and the leading critics of the press. They are greeted with cheers from the upper gallery, for their presence insures the success of an opera appreciated by the public. They, however, are under the impression that "SARA" is to be given, for Sevender's ruse has borne fruit. They are, therefore, surprised at the character of the audience, but trusting in Pitts, explain away the incongruities.

Next, ABIGAIL, VALENTINE, ROBERT, FAITH, SMITH, and the MACDOUGALS enter and are shown to the box on the right. The MACDOUGALS are still in Greek costume and ABIGAIL wears the family seed pearls. They bow effusively to the front row and stare about the theatre in surprise. The director taps on his stand and the footlights shine.

The curtain rises heavily and discloses the interior of the

church at Les Saintes-Maries de la Mer, showing the apse, choir, and two bays of the nave. On the right a door with a basin for holy water, and near the steps a well surrounded by an iron grill. In the apse there is an altar on three steps, which bears an enormous cross, a reliquary, and two rows of candelabra. Near the opening for the staircase to the crypt, and directly over the door to the latter, is a platform approached by several steps, which is covered with a heavy cloth of purple and gold. Along the walls of the choir are benches, and in the nave chairs. The modern grill about the stairs, the relics, galleries, &c., are removed. Before the altar the host burns feebly.

SCENE II

The stage remains in silence for a moment. Then the door opens, a grey light from the clouds penetrates, and waves are heard breaking along the shore. HALLOWALL, impersonating an old man, comes in, crosses himself, ascends the steps, and proceeds to pull a rope that is hung in the choir near the wall. A bell tolls slowly and dismally, continuing by its own weight to strike after HALLOWALL ceases to move it. He then kneels before the altar, lifting his hands in prayer. The Society of Elders have been greatly exercised over this papistical scene, and the one who denounced the High Church Episcopalian in the first Act now bursts out.

5TH ELDER. Sacrilege! (*Hisses proceed from the upper gallery. The 5TH ELDER turns around.*) I am a Baptist!

[*Howls from the gallery: "Put him out!"*
The director abandons his music. HALLO-

WALL *continues to kneel with uplifted hands. It is evident that he is studying his part.*

ABIGAIL. I think this is outrageous. (*Addressing the audience.*) For shame! This is a performance for charity!

[*Clapping now opposes the faction which whistles, and after a heated contest the audience cheers the director, who again taps on his stand. The orchestra resumes and HALLOWALL at last sings.*

HALLOWALL. "Salomé! Mary Salomé! And thou, sweet Mary, blessèd Madeleine, Mother of Charity! And thou, fair Mary Jacobé, thrice blest in holiness! O Holy Trinity of Truth, which knew no death, though cast upon fierce seas to die! And Suzanna, thou exiled servitor of such fearful grace!"

ABIGAIL. Suzanna? [*Hisses.*

HALLOWALL. "I beseech you to hear me, I supplicate your awful wisdom, I entreat you to hearken to the words of one among your children! I ask for but a simple gift, a gift ungiven by human hands. I see the dead lie sleeping by the sea, beaten by the winds and whitened by the foam. I hear the wilderness of the sea, I hear the waves that sing slow songs and I long to flee far from the wild sea which sings. I long to pass far from men, for they do not tell me why they live nor why is life. O Saintes-Maries, for what is life? Why is it? I do not know. No

one knows. (*A pause.*) Surely I hear strange sounds ! The beating of wings approaches me, the wings of angels pure and white ! It is they ! The Marys come, there are jackdaws in the air with great worms in their claws that they have dug up early in the morning. The air is full of Birmingham smoke, and I hear the noonday whistle ! They are speaking to me ! ”

A VOICE (*from above*). “ How silly to ask about life ! No one knows anything about it. Go home and help your wife with the washing.” [*A silence.*

HALLOWALL. “ I dislike the smell of soap.

[He rises, staggers, and falls in a corner, with his back against the wall, facing the scene. There is a pause, and then steps are heard on the sands outside. Three fishermen and a Bohemian enter, bearing on their shoulders an improvised stretcher resembling a table. Upon it is the body of a young girl, apparently drowned.]

“ My daughter ! ”

ABIGAIL (*breaking in*). What does he say ?

[Hisses. The fishermen advance slowly, leaving the table before the staircase to the crypt in the centre of the stage.]

1ST FISHERMAN. “ Too bad, a fine-looking girl.”

2ND FISHERMAN. “ Yes, they were like flowers.”

BOHEMIAN. “ The sea is very hungry.”

3RD FISHERMAN. “ Men can only be hungry until they lose their bodies. Then they will be God.”

1ST FISHERMAN. "I shall never be God."

5TH ELDER (*interrupting*). This is unbearable.
This is not "Sara." [*Loud whistles.*]

2ND FISHERMAN. "Our children may be—if they are good."

BOHEMIAN. "Nothing is real."

1ST FISHERMAN. "Come, let us get to work."

[*They go down into the crypt. Suddenly GAULBERT, in the rôle of a young man, rushes in and falls on the drowned girl's stretcher.*]

GAULBERT. "Phélyo! Phélyo! Don't die! Must you die? Will you die? Shall you die?"

[*He bursts into tears. Then he jumps up and shakes his fist at the cross.*]

"Curse him! I hate God."

[*The Baptist member gets up hurriedly and goes out.*]

"No one has the right to take my girl away from me." [*He kneels beside her.*]

"You were like a fish in a globe of bright blue glass. Do you remember when I first met you? You had on your polka dot dimity and I wore my new overalls. We went down to the Sailors' Spar and I bought you three cents' worth of salt-water taffy. The pink kind cost four cents—I suppose the moths get into the other. The village clung about the fortress church with flashing walls; they didn't have the streets paved then, and you got your shoes full of sand. I remember I took one of

them off for you and you seized the opportunity to wash your foot. We were alone. Before us a gentle grove of hawthorn rose fantastically against the sky, and the clouds held between the blackened lace of twigs a star resembling a bird's egg. The sea tickled the sands and made them giggle. Then I put my arms around you and kissed you again, and again, and again. We went to your house and I scorched my pants by the fire. Lord! You are not dead? I can't believe you are dead! Speak, speak, look at me!"

[He falls in a fit, and then DEVALOISE, as a Bohemian princess, hurries in.]

DEVALOISE. "He is like a young horse. He is like the autumn sun floating in the smoke of burning leaves. (*At these words HALLOWALL sits up.*) His cheeks are fresh as the petals of a rose. They are warm and soft——"

HALLOWALL (*who has risen and approached DEVALOISE*). Wait a minute. Look here! This is not "Sara!" Those lines were in "Suzanna."

GAULBERT (*from his fit*). Sit down.

HALLOWALL. I won't.

3RD ELDER. You're right, Pitts. There's something wrong.

[The director throws down his baton and leaves the orchestra.]

GAULBERT. Be quiet. This is "Sara." Let the performance continue.

HALLOWALL. It is not "Sara." You have tricked

me into taking part in "Suzanna." You are clever, Mr. Orson.

GAULBERT. Let the thing be given. You can complain afterwards.

[The audience, who have not comprehended so far, now burst with uproarious indignation.]

HALLOWALL *struts to the front of the stage and addresses them.*

HALLOWALL. My friends, there has been a gross deception. This is not "Sara," but "Suzanna." *(Yells from above.)* I was induced in kindness to take the part I began, thinking it in "Sara" and for charity. I have been manipulated. This opera, which I righteously forbade, has been given against my orders and with my knowledge duped. My friends, the Society of Elders are here to attend "Sara"; my family is here to attend "Sara"; I am here to play "Sara." If by the craftiness of others "Suzanna" has been substituted, I inform the public here that it is in defiance of me, and that the guilty ones shall suffer.

[The ELDERS here cheer loudly. Fury prompts the gallery.]

GAULBERT *(taking his place beside HALLOWALL).* Gentlemen! I appeal to you all to protest against the outrageous action of this singer.

HALLOWALL. Singer? I am President of the Society of Elders!

GAULBERT. It is true. Yet I demand that he shall be shown order. It is in your interest that

the opera should be given perfectly. There is no excuse for interrupting it. If Pitts has been duped, let him conceal his ridiculousness in silence. See what a clown he appears! You all admire "Suzanna." Down with the Society of Elders! They are tyrants. (*Tremendous applause.*) They censured my opera on hearsay, and it was only by invention that I managed to present to you as much as I have. It is true that I deceived Pitts and the Society. Was I wrong? Am I not justified? (*Deafening applause.*) Assert your rights; demand the operas you like; free yourselves from oligarchic tyranny. Away with the Arcopagus! You are not slaves; why tolerate such an insult as the supervision of a governess? (*Laughter.*) This is a country of men, and men choose their own operas. I invoke you to abolish the veto power of these old gentlemen and to demonstrate actively your opinions. You are allowing feudalism to wrap its tentacles around you. Such democracy is not enough—proclaim true socialism and be men. I ask you if "Suzanna" is not an opera to your taste? (*Demonstrations.*) Then insist that it shall be presented to you. I have contrived this much by ruse; I count on you now to assure the future representations by energetic measures. Down with the power of the Elders!

[*The acclamations of the gallery are vehement.*]

HALLOWALL. Treason! The dignity of my institution is as ancient as it is strong. I need not

call upon my fellow-citizens for respect. When I say that this scoundrel has richly lied to place me in so delicate a situation in order to get me in his power, it is enough to condemn him. I have been too trusting; my goodness served him. Therefore it is I who urge the partisanship of my people to spurn what their Elders find contemptible.

GAULBERT. Hear! He calls "Suzanna" contemptible. I ask public opinion to answer him! Is it not enough that he is so easily manipulated, to proclaim his inefficiency to judge? Is "Suzanna" contemptible?

[Vociferous negatives from the gallery.]

Shall "Suzanna" be censured?

[Fearful excitement.]

HALLOWALL. I call upon the police to restore order.

[At this the gallery loses all control of itself.]

GAULBERT retires. ABIGAIL leans forward.

ABIGAIL. Fie! That Boston should be so ill bred.

[This is the cue for a rain of cabbages, cats, and similar missiles to project from the gallery and pelt upon HALLOWALL.]

IPHEGENIA. For shame!

[The offensive battery is directed against the MACDOUGALS' box and against the front row of the orchestra. The three camps of the enemy are speedily put to rout. As their constituents retreat from the theatre,

some by the stage doors, others by the main exit, the police grapple with the gallery and the curtain falls hastily. The orchestra has long since departed. Upon demands that the opera continue, GAULBERT comes out and is cheered.

GAULBERT. Unfortunately, due to the lateness of the hour, the present performance must be terminated. The tickets will be refunded at the box office, with the hope that to-morrow night a perfect representation may be given.

[He retires triumphantly and the gallery slowly leaves the theatre as the entire audience is supposed to do. The footlights and most of the lights in the theatre go out. The caretakers appear with coverings for the boxes and cover as many of them as are empty. Then the curtain is pulled up again and shows the stage already half dismantled. The accessories are all disposed of, and during the following scenes the whole setting is taken away, so that the machinery of the theatre is entirely laid bare. Stage hands hurry around and every preparation is being made to close the theatre for the night.]

SCENE III

HALLOWALL and GAULBERT are in the middle of the stage. ABIGAIL and VALENTINE shortly afterwards reappear in the box. The others are not present.

HALLOWALL. You are a conspirator, sir.

GAULBERT. I know it. But don't you see what a fool you have made of yourself? If you had waited until the opera was all over, you could have won your public by dignity alone. Now you have lost everything by conceiving a farce.

HALLOWALL. Lost everything? We shall see. They may have assaulted me, but that does not prove that "Suzanna" will ever be played.

GAULBERT. You are in my power, Pitts. Your ridiculous actions give me the reins. Even if you had been more sensible, the fact that you had acted in "Suzanna" and that the Society attended would have rendered all your protests vain. You must admit that the victory is mine, and that it is useless for you to resist me any more.

HALLOWALL. I have as much authority as ever to prevent your opera.

GAULBERT. Yes, but if you use it, it will sound the beginning of the end for your position. One more manifestation like your last will be fatal to you and to the whole Society. People will not put up with it, you know. They respect authority, but

never in a comedian. Since you have shown yourself a comedian, your only course is to remain silent, or whatever you do will be laughed at. That is the tragedy of comedians.

HALLOWALL. Absurd. I will not allow "Suzanna" to be played, all the more so for your impertinence.

GAULBERT. It is your own affair. I feel perfectly assured that nothing can prevent "Suzanna's" being played again to-morrow night. If the public are opposed, the point in the contest will move from "Suzanna" itself and become one between your authority and the public's will. "Suzanna" will be a symbol for that struggle, and, whatever the result, will win immortality. You see, you will render me enormous services in opposing me; you will double my victory. If you are silent, the opera will run the common course of all operas, and people will think there is something, after all, in your methods. There is nothing more respected than a silent man whom one knows can talk.

HALLOWALL. You are a splendid arguer, Orson, but I am not to be "manipulated" endlessly. I say that I shall firmly forbid "Suzanna"; I mean it.

GAULBERT. You are a mystery—or an exceedingly simple man. You have seen that "Suzanna" is not an opera to censure; you only disapproved of it when you heard a sentence you knew to be in it. It is childish to hang on to a resolution when everything counsels you to change your mind. Do prove

to me that you are worthy of the responsible position you occupy.

HALLOWALL. Don't talk to me. I am confirmed in my idea.

[*He walks irately back and forth.* GAULBERT
sits down and lights a cigarette.

ABIGAIL (*in the box with VALENTINE*). "'Alf a 'andful?" Oh, I am sure I could never learn cockney, my Lord. Besides, we are so conservativé in Boston.

VALENTINE. I'll speak French if you like.

ABIGAIL. Dear me ; parlez-vous Français ?

VALENTINE. Il est dangereux de se pencher en dehors ! E pericoloso sporgersi ! Nicht hinauslehnen !

ABIGAIL. Why, you are a regular polyglot !

VALENTINE. Not at all. I eat very little.

ABIGAIL. La, la. You are a wit, my dear Lord. You must find us very dry.

VALENTINE. Really ? Why didn't you say so ? We can run over to the Touraine now.

ABIGAIL. What for ?

VALENTINE. I am thirsty, too.

ABIGAIL. What *would* my husband say ?

VALENTINE. Extra dry, no doubt. But he needn't come.

ABIGAIL. Do you think it is done ?

VALENTINE. What of it ? Besides, H. is in an awful temper.

ABIGAIL. You must be shocked by these proceedings. I am disgusted with Hallowall, quite disgusted.

VALENTINE. He is a bore.

ABIGAIL. I find him so. You, my Lord, are the cruel contrast—such esprit !

VALENTINE. You bet I'm a spree.

ABIGAIL. You are overflowing with bonhomie.

VALENTINE. I prefer Cuticura ; it hasn't scratched yet.

ABIGAIL. Look at Hallowall now ; who could cling to him ?

VALENTINE. Only a barnacle.

ABIGAIL. My dear friend, you have won my devotion.

VALENTINE. I took to you the moment I saw you in those pearls. I shall always accept pearls in memory of that instant. You have no idea how much pearls mean to me now.

ABIGAIL. Is it true ? Do you really care so much for me ?

VALENTINE. You are the pearl of my dreams.

ABIGAIL (*throwing herself about his neck*). You are bringing spring into my life.

VALENTINE (*untwisting her*). There, there, we are in public. What do you say to the Touraine ?

ABIGAIL. A little supper tête-à-tête ?

VALENTINE. Tête-à-tête and bird for two.

ABIGAIL. So much for Hallowall—come on.

VALENTINE. Before the spring dries up. Aren't you a devil ! [*They hurry out of the box and disappear.*]

HALLOWALL. No, sir, I have decided.

GAULBERT. I am disappointed.

SCENE IV

FAITH, ROBERT, DEVALOISE, *the* MACDOUGALS, *and*
SMITH *come out from the wings.*

IPHEGENIA. At last ! My poor Mr. Pitts !

DEVALOISE. Come and change your things, Gaulbert ; there is no need of wasting time.

GAULBERT. You know where your room is, do you not, Mr. Pitts ?

HALLOWALL. Yes. I am going to rest for a moment. [DEVALOISE *and* GAULBERT *go out.*

IPHEGENIA. You do not know how horrified I am by what has happened, Hallowall ; it is scandalous.

HALLOWALL. I shall be recompensed, Iphegenia.

SARCOPHAGUS. The baseness of this fellow who insinuated himself into your home is reprehensible. I am all broken up.

FAITH. Where are Mother and Mr. Ormont ?

HALLOWALL. I have not seen them.

IPHEGENIA. I should think they would be the first to condole with you.

ROBERT. They probably have gone home.

SMITH. We hurried to console you, but the whole place was in a panic and we could not find you. Do believe me when I say that you were brutally treated, and that I shall exert all my effort to aid you in chastising the barbarians. Nothing but the strongest methods are worthy. I can hardly believe that we have all been so deceived.

SARCOPHAGUS. We are all your allies, Hallowall, and encourage you to persist in the path of righteousness. Nothing can express my feelings in regard to this affair.

IPHEGENIA. We shall use our names against those of your enemies. We must now hurry home and prepare ourselves for the dance. Are you coming, Hallowall?

HALLOWALL. I must change my clothes. Sevender, you take them home.

ROBERT. I want to talk with you for a moment. Mr. Smith, will you accompany the Macdougals? I will stop for you all at Mr. Pitts', to take you to the hall.

SMITH. Gladly.

IPHEGENIA. At twelve sharp! The spirit of the dances depends largely on the hour.

FAITH. We will be there.

[*The MACDOUGALS and SMITH go away.*]

ROBERT. It is strange about Mrs. Pitts.

FAITH. I am going to look for her.

[*FAITH disappears.*]

SCENE V

ROBERT. Mr. Pitts, I want to apologise for the plot I allowed to occur against you. You see Mr. Orson is a very old friend of mine and so I promised to say nothing.

HALLOWALL. If you could have prevented it, it would have been simpler.

ROBERT. Forgive me. That is past. But I can prevent anything more happening.

HALLOWALL. How ?

ROBERT. I think I can dissuade Gaulbert from producing his opera in Boston ; or, if not, I am friends with all the critics, and I can win public opinion to you through them. Also, I think I can arrange to have this theatre closed.

HALLOWALL. My boy, you are indeed my friend if you will help me. I can, of course, exert full authority, but it will be hard for me to gain sympathy, I see. Do this for me.

ROBERT. Eagerly. But of course there are conditions.

HALLOWALL. What ?

ROBERT. I shall insist on becoming a member of the Society of Elders, and on your consent to my marriage with Faith.

HALLOWALL. You are excessive ; it is not in my power to elect you to the Society. That is in the hands of the others.

ROBERT. You can advise them.

HALLOWALL. You are not eligible ; it would be a farce.

ROBERT. New peers are created to support weak governments.

HALLOWALL. That would be a tremendous con-

cession, a permanent one, while your services would only be temporary.

ROBERT. Your mistake to-night shows that you need new blood. I am better informed than you.

HALLOWALL. I cannot promise it. And as to marrying Faith : I have told you again and again that I will not permit it. She does not love you, in the first place.

ROBERT. That is my affair.

HALLOWALL. No, no.

ROBERT. Very well. Then I shall cast my lot with Gaulbert. Perhaps later I shall be able to demand instead of begging.

HALLOWALL. Oh dear, oh dear ! Can't we compromise ?

ROBERT. I have stated my conditions.

HALLOWALL. Give me time.

ROBERT. No.

HALLOWALL. Well, then, it is war. Go to that sneak.

ROBERT. Mr. Pitts, Orson is my friend.

HALLOWALL. You are two of a kind—underhanded conspirators. I have done well to foil you.

ROBERT. Please do not insult me.

HALLOWALL. You rascal ! Don't make overtures to me. I will not sell my honour. You are a spy and a blackmailer.

ROBERT. You shall call me brother.

HALLOWALL. Never ! You think your forces in-

vincible ; go to them and offer me battle. You are gadflies.

ROBERT. You are a fool. When you see what fools all your friends are you will wake up.

HALLOWALL. Leave me !

[He stamps the floor. DEVALOISE enters.]

DEVALOISE. What ? Does the tumult persist ?

ROBERT. I am going to fetch the Macdougals. I shall meet you at the hall. Is Gaulbert in his room ?

DEVALOISE. Yes.

ROBERT. I want a word with him ; good-bye till later. *[He goes out.]*

SCENE VI

HALLOWALL. I suppose you are a party to their plans.

DEVALOISE. I ? I want nothing, Mr. Pitts, but the greatest benefit for all ; if I have yielded to indirect methods, it has been in the interest of everyone. Yours is veritably theirs. You are hurting yourself.

HALLOWALL. Rubbish !

DEVALOISE. When I asked you to walk into this trap, it was hoping that you would be big enough to open your eyes and see things as they are. I expected too much, and so was unwise. But I am sure that your narrowness is the cause of all our

troubles, as it is of yours. You are painfully little, Mr. Pitts.

HALLOWALL. Don't insult me, too. I think my position insures my weight.

DEVALOISE. I wish it did ; you are middle class.

HALLOWALL. I am not ! My family has always been aristocratic.

DEVALOISE. That does not matter in America. The upper classes invariably become middle class here, unless they keep active.

HALLOWALL (*distantly*). I don't understand you.

DEVALOISE. Active, I mean, in ideas ; your ideas are of the eighteenth century. Strange to say, it is for that reason that you are given a position of such importance. Why in a progressive country any respect should be had for past conditions—or present conditions—I do not see. It is admitted that everything is all wrong to-day, but that it was worse a hundred years ago. It is incredible to stick to the past, then. Look at your absurd laws here ; you call them blue laws yourself. They are restrictions made centuries ago for a different people. You apply them to matters unheard of in those days. Soda fountains were not popular in 1700 ; they are to-day, and yet you close them on Sundays. Everybody wants soda on Sundays ; that is the day above all that people must have soda water. You close the theatres on Sunday ; that is the day when people want to see plays. Week-day nights they are too tired to go to serious plays, they demand

poor but amusing ones ; by closing the theatres on Sunday you not only impose upon the people, but you contribute largely to the reason for the decadence of the stage. People would gladly go to a good play on Sunday. You close everything on Sunday. No normal population ever has been or ever will be contented with going to church, visiting the museums, or walking in the rain on the only day that is theirs. It is an outrage that they should be robbed of all entertainment and pleasure. They turn to worse things to replace healthful amusements. They are incapable in this country of simple things ; let them have their theatres, their concerts, and their cafés on Sunday ; let them make a festival of the day and forget the bitterness of the week in joyful play. Christ wishes this. He never told people that they must be unhappy on Sunday. They are children, we are all children, and you know what it does to a child to take his play away. You never allow your people to play. They are morbid. It would be better that they were immoral. You think that religion and worship are things of importance ; you are wrong. They are of no consequence whatever. No one knows or ever will know the truth, and it is better to strengthen ourselves than to prove our unfitness by destroying our health. If churches were not such lovely things, breathing of men's own love, I should desire to see them all destroyed. At least, Mr. Pitts, realise that you are wrong in re-

stricting the field of art in any way, and that the more you turn to extending the compass of people's minds, instead of starving them, the more powerful you will become. I want you to help "Suzanna," and to show your love for your people by trying to please them. Friendship is not disciplinary; it is a form of that mystery which alone makes life bearable—love. Be a friend, not a father. (*There is a pause.*) I have said too much.

HALLOWALL. The instincts of a race cannot be changed.

DEVALOISE. Tradition is not an instinct.

HALLOWALL. You know very well that I could not assent to your proposals.

DEVALOISE. But you could prepare the way. You admit that I am right?

HALLOWALL. Undoubtedly. Only time will work out the change, however. As it is, I see myself obliged to resolutely forbid "Suzanna."

DEVALOISE. You may kiss my hand.

HALLOWALL. I am afraid to.

DEVALOISE. Not this time.

HALLOWALL (*kissing her hand and retaining it*). You are a fascinating woman, a brilliant woman, Mrs. Orson.

DEVALOISE. You are very gallant, Mr. Pitts.

HALLOWALL. I admire you.

DEVALOISE. Women hate that from a man.

HALLOWALL. If I were younger I should flirt with you in spite of myself.

DEVALOISE. I do not find you disqualified.

HALLOWALL. Really ? I am not awfully decrepit-looking, am I ?

DEVALOISE. American men think themselves old at fifty. They are all prompted by their wives' ages.

HALLOWALL. You stimulate me. Abigail is awfully depressing. I dress every morning with the idea that I may have to wear the same clothes in a coffin by night.

DEVALOISE. Heavens ! You ought to assert yourself.

HALLOWALL. If I only dared !

DEVALOISE. Try to dare.

HALLOWALL. Now ?

DEVALOISE. I think it my duty to help you in so pitiable a case.

[She turns her head and HALLOWALL cautiously kisses her.]

HALLOWALL. Well ! After this afternoon I never thought to be so wicked again.

DEVALOISE. Poor fellow ! Be wicked once more.

[He repeats the operation.]

HALLOWALL. I am another man.

DEVALOISE (*compassionately*). Of course you are. It is what you need. You must arrange to have these wicked things every day. I shall prescribe for you ; in a short time you will become quite human. Your case interests me. Now let us run to see the Macdougals dance, and forget all about our troubles.

[They skip toward the wings and run into

GAULBERT. *Hallowall is dumbfounded, but DEVALOISE laughs derisively and draws him away, while GAULBERT scowls ferociously.*

SCENE VII

FAITH *walks in and GAULBERT stands silently watching her.*

FAITH. I am sure I do not know what has become of Mother. Don't you think it strange that she should have disappeared ?

GAULBERT. Yes.

FAITH. Ormont must have taken her home ; she is easily shocked.

GAULBERT. Oh !

FAITH. But where is everyone else ? Has Father gone ? They seem to worry very little as to whether I am left alone here. Are we the only ones in the theatre ?

GAULBERT. Except for the workmen.

FAITH. Fortunately I am not timid. Will you see me home ? What is the matter ? Why do you look at me like that ?

GAULBERT. Pardon me. I am tired, a little sad. I will take you home.

FAITH. I am sorry. Has Mrs. Orson gone ?

GAULBERT. I have no wife.

FAITH. No wife ? Surely Mrs. Orson is your wife ?

GAULBERT. She is not Mrs. Orson; that was a part of the fun. She is Devaloise Orchard simply, and I never knew her except as a singer.

FAITH. Oh. (*A pause.*) Will you help me with my coat ? .

[GAULBERT *takes her coat and holds it for her. As she slips her arms into it their hands touch. They are both nervous and silent. FAITH walks across the stage. She turns and looks back at GAULBERT. They gaze at each other without a word.*

GAULBERT. I suppose you will marry Bob before long.

FAITH. I will never marry Bob. Our affection is that of children; it is only half serious.

GAULBERT. You do not love Bob ?

FAITH. Of course not; not in that way.

GAULBERT. But he loves you.

FAITH. How silly; he only wants to marry me.

GAULBERT. Oh.

FAITH. Which way is the door ?

GAULBERT. This way.

[*He joins her and she lays her hand on his arm.*

FAITH. What is the matter ? Have I done anything ?

GAULBERT. No, no.

FAITH. Tell me the truth.

[*He looks at her, almost in tears.*

GAULBERT. I am not happy.

FAITH. No one is.

GAULBERT. But I might be. To see happiness so near, without the possibility of seizing it—that is unhappiness.

FAITH. Is anything really impossible for you ?

GAULBERT. To break duties.

FAITH. What duties can stand in the way of happiness ? They are no longer duties then.

GAULBERT. Regard for others.

FAITH. That in excess is immoral.

GAULBERT. Hopelessness.

FAITH. Which is cowardice.

GAULBERT. Shall I speak ?

FAITH. Please.

[He gazes at her with sudden calmness.]

GAULBERT. I have known you for a day. I am an artist, you a social favourite. I am poor, you are destined for luxury ; we are strangers in every sense, we have nothing in common. It is beyond reason for me to say anything ; it is unworthy of me.

FAITH. See my confidence.

GAULBERT. You know I love you ! What are you going to do ? Banish me, revile me, laugh at me ? You will be cruel ; I expected it. I am ashamed to have shown ; you must despise me. I could not help it.

FAITH. Well ?

GAULBERT. Don't be hard. If you destroy my self-esteem you will ruin me.

FAITH. Take me home.

GAULBERT. Say something! Don't leave me bare; at least say you hate me—one word.

FAITH. I do not hate you; you are a fool. Take me home.

GAULBERT. You scorn me, you laugh at me.

FAITH. Don't, don't. You injure yourself. I think none of these things.

GAULBERT. Then what do you think?

[FAITH holds out her hand to him. He takes it and kisses it more or less conventionally.]

FAITH. Do not give it back.

[He searches her expression.]

GAULBERT. Faith!

[He seizes her in his arms. In the meantime most of the lights have been turned out in the rear, and the two remain silent for several moments.]

FAITH. You fool—you lovely fool.

GAULBERT. We are both fools.

[They move to a chair. GAULBERT places FAITH in it and kneels at her feet.]

Je t'aime—je t'aime!

FAITH. Moi aussi.

[More lights go out. The theatre is on the point of being closed.]

GAULBERT. I was so afraid, but now I am so happy.

FAITH. They told me you were married.

GAULBERT. What folly! You should have known;

you should have seen when first I looked at you that I was a living supplication.

FAITH. I did see.

GAULBERT. The world is very beautiful. Did you know it was so beautiful ?

FAITH. I have dreamed it was. When I played among the dead leaves in the forest and sent them bobbing down the dying brook, I knew that the world would be beautiful. I used to look everywhere, and sometimes even then I found wonderful things. I buried two acorns secretly because that was beautiful.

GAULBERT. Let us go together and dig them up.

FAITH. They will be trees perhaps.

GAULBERT. Not if you buried them secretly ; even nature would respect that beauty.

FAITH. Did you search everywhere for this moment ?

GAULBERT. I thought I did, but it was only in sterile places. I pried art to pieces, and science and religion. I never looked under the dead leaves, nor sent them away on the brook. You were lost in the forest, but I had not even entered it.

FAITH. Then I can show you what worlds are in it.

GAULBERT. We shall never see again. We must live in the worlds that we have discovered in our searchings, revealing to each other, for we have left real things too far behind us.

[They kiss each other and the last-lights go out,

not only in the auditorium, but in the theatre itself. A door bangs, proclaiming the exit of the last employée, and the curtain falls before FAITH and GAULBERT, who remain unconscious of their situation.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

THE grill-room of the American House. Like all grill-rooms, it is Anglo-German, and done in oak, with frescoed plaster. Along both sides are tables, and in the rear is a stand for the orchestra. The door is in the right-hand corner, at the bottom of a flight of stairs that leads to the street. The service entrance is to the left of the platform, in the rear wall. Over the door is hung "Ladies' Industrial Union. Perkin's Hall," and the following signs are tacked up on the walls:—

"L. I. U. POPULAR CONCERT
In Perkin's Hall.

Programme: Bach—The Passion of St. Matthew.
Beethoven—Choral from the 9th Symphony.
Haydn—The Creation.
Strauss—Death and Transfiguration.
Debussy—Martyrdom of St. Sebastian.
Wagner—Parsifal.
And other rollicking ditties.
Camomile, Tilleul, and wafers will be served."

"POPULAR LECTURE FOR THE LITTLE ONES
on the
Hexancistra Quadricuspis,
The Macrauchenida,
The Cinclopyramis Murrayana,
and other familiar insects.
Adults will not be admitted."

"JOHNSON SOCIETY.

A series of afternoons will be devoted
to the Reading of the great Dictionary.
The number of places is limited."

"LATEST NOVELS.

The Classics in a Nutshell, or the Harvard Pentameter. By
George Eliot.

The Geometrical Progression of Ancestors. A solution of
the Hen and Egg Problem of Socrates. By A. Comte."

"Try our Acropolis Beans.

Pericles ate baked beans, and Aspasia brown bread.
This proves that even the Athenians were intellectual."

"Use Ariadne's Bath Salts.

Company founded 2200 B.C. at Knossos.
Furnishers to H.R.H. Minos and the Hallstadts.
Dardanus writes: 'Since using your salts the bath is a
pleasure.'"

SCENE I

*It is nearly midnight and several supper parties are
in progress. The TZIGANES are playing gaily
and the WAITERS are hurrying about. ROBERT
and the HEAD WAITER are in a discussion,
while SMITH is smelling of everything in the
room. The signs have just been put up and*

are still a cause of merriment to the clients. When the music stops, the HEAD WAITER addresses his guests.

HEAD WAITER. Gentlemen ! I have the honour to-night to surprise you by the appearance of some famous dancers. The artists will perform at midnight exactly.

[Loud applause. The TZIGANES recommence.

ROBERT. You understand perfectly ? The Macdougals think they are in the Industrial Union and the illusion must be kept up until the last. They are preparing themselves upstairs. Get your orchestra out before they come down. And now you may bring us something to eat. *(Turning to one of the tables in the foreground.)* Come on, Smith ! A bottle of champagne.

SMITH. Ask them to play "The Harmonious Blacksmith" from Siegfried or "The Prize Fight" from the Meister Singers. I dote on Puccini.

ROBERT. So do I ; he wrote Chopin's Funeral March.

SMITH. Is Chopin dead ?

ROBERT. Of course. I have had Ring Worms ever since I heard his Tetralogie of the Niebelungens.

SMITH. I have paraphrased that for the odour-phone.

ROBERT. Two bottles !

[They sit down and prepare their appetites for supper.

SMITH. So this is the famous Industrial Union.

ROBERT. Yes. 'The Girls' Friendly Society is on the floor above.

SMITH. Really? I should like to join. I feel especially friendly this evening. What do they do?

ROBERT. Study music mostly. They have so many pianos that the place is called piano fort.

SMITH. I must send them my "Gradus ad Parnassum."

ROBERT. Why, do you know Parnassum?

SMITH. Know him? Brought up with him!

ROBERT. Do tell.

SMITH. I had no idea the Ladies' Industrial was so agreeable. The Macdougals will enjoy dancing here. It will quite take the smell of that awful scene at the theatre out of us. Ah! here is the wine; I should like a little partridge. What do you say?

ROBERT. Partridge, waiter. I remember the last time I had partridge—still, that is a thing that might happen to anyone.

SCENE II

ABIGAIL and ORMONT come down the steps into the grill-room. The WAITER shows them to a table opposite BOB's.

ABIGAIL (*giggling*). And then, my Lord, they curled my hair.

VALENTINE. Which one ?

[ROBERT *looks around in surprise.*

ROBERT. Ha, ha !

[ABIGAIL and ORMONT *start convulsively.*

SMITH. How *is* your Mother ?

ABIGAIL (*rising with great dignity*). Mr. Sevender, I thought you were to take the Macdougals to Perkin's Hall.

ROBERT (*rising with superior dignity*). Mrs. Pitts, I am surprised to see you in such a place, especially without Mr. Pitts.

ABIGAIL. I am protected by Lord Ormont.

ROBERT. Your husband expects you at the Hall. Besides, it is two hours ago that you disappeared. I have already delivered the Macdougals. Ormont, I am shocked.

ABIGAIL. Mr. Sevender !

ROBERT. There can be no explanation.

ABIGAIL. Bob, there's a good boy. We have come for a bite to eat. Where else could we have gone ?

ROBERT. Where have you been all this time ? As Faith's friend, I have a right to know.

ABIGAIL. Only to the Touraine. Everyone was there.

ROBERT. Good Lord ! You were seen ? I am afraid, Mrs. Pitts, that I shall have to withdraw my petition for your daughter's hand.

ABIGAIL. Oh, Bob ! Forgive me. Surely with Lord Ormont it is correct.

ROBERT. Lord Ormont ! That is Orson's valet.

ABIGAIL (*collapsing into ORMONT's arms*). The impostor !

ROBERT. I shall overlook your breach of etiquette, Mrs. Pitts, on one condition.

ABIGAIL. Tell me.

ROBERT. That you use your influence with Mr. Pitts for me.

ABIGAIL. Anything, of course. Oh, my dear Bob ! The ruffian !

VALENTINE. Abigail !

ABIGAIL (*smiling*). He is a good sort, Bob, even if he isn't a Lord. If you could have seen the time we had at the Touraine. They put us out.

ROBERT. You naughty person ! Come over here and have supper with us.

ABIGAIL. Then you promise not to breathe a word of this ?

ROBERT. On my condition.

ABIGAIL. It shall be. Come on, Valentine.

SMITH. How is your Mother ?

[*They all sit down at ROBERT's table.*]

ROBERT. Waiter, more champagne and several partridges.

ABIGAIL. I haven't done this since I was in Montpelier, Vermont ! I met Hallowall at a bean supper. Boston people are so conventional. (*To VALENTINE*) Why do you allow them to make fun of you ? I am sure you are a lord. (*To ROBERT*) If he were a valet, he would be cross.

VALENTINE. Isn't she droll? If Hallowall only knew what he were missing.

ROBERT. Hallowall never missed anything yet. Here's to "Suzanna."

ABIGAIL. Long live "Suzanna!"

SMITH. How is your Mother?

[They all drink a deep toast.]

SCENE III

Two of the members of the Society of Elders enter the grill-room and come within ABIGAIL's zone.

ABIGAIL. Well!

1ST ELDER. You here already, Mrs. Pitts?

ABIGAIL. Already?

2ND ELDER. The dances do not begin until twelve, do they?

ABIGAIL. What dances?

1ST ELDER. The Macdougals'.

ABIGAIL. You have come to see the Macdougals dance?

2ND ELDER. Of course. When we arrived at Perkin's Hall, they told us the dances were to be given here instead.

ABIGAIL. Bob! Is this your doing?

2ND ELDER. Such a good idea to dance here; eccentric, like all their ideas.

1ST ELDER. The contrast is a stroke of genius.

Ordinary artists would have insisted on appropriate *mise-en-scène*.

ABIGAIL. Bob, will you present Mr. Smith ?

ROBERT. Mr. Smith, Lot Bates—the salt of the earth ; Mr. Dore—known as Cuspi by his friends.

[The two Elders sit down at BOB's table.]

1ST ELDER. Dreadful affair at the theatre, was it not, Mrs. Pitts ?

ABIGAIL. Shocking.

[The orchestra finishes playing and leaves the room, carrying its chairs and music stands with it. The piano is pushed out of the way. Those people who expect acrobats to appear clap loudly.]

1ST ELDER. Who are these people that are clapping ? I have never seen any of them before.

ROBERT. Those are admirers of the Macdougals, who have come to see them dance.

2ND ELDER. I am surprised not to see more people I know.

ROBERT. I see a lot of people I know.

SMITH. I do wish Sarcophagus would let me accompany him with the odourphone.

ROBERT. He is probably afraid of having to accompany the odourphone.

SCENE IV

SARCOPHAGUS *comes out by the service door on the left and steps on to the platform. He is greeted with astonished laughter by the uninitiated, who do not know at all what to make of him.*

VALENTINE. What handsome fur buskins Sarcophagus has on.

ROBERT. Those are not buskins !

[Silence is made for SARCOPHAGUS, who shows a desire to speak.]

SARCOPHAGUS. My friends, I have first of all to express the joy my sister and I feel in answering the warm invitation we have received to dance our new Mystery Dances in your city. In this venerable hall of the Ladies' Educational and Industrial Union—what sanctity in those words !—we shall now do our best to fulfil your hopes of the regeneration of art. The ancient mysteries of Eleusis have lent subjects for our thoughts. Upon their promptings we have built up our dances, the argument of which is the following. Jinks, who is to be married in London on Monday night, has inadvertently made an appointment with his stenographer for Tuesday morning in Paris. He comes to the office early Monday morning on the way to the train, to break his engagement for the next day. The mystic dances are built on this sacred theme. It is sufficient

to mention the name of Proserpine to cloak them with the proper glamour.

[SARCOPHAGUS *retires. The public are too intrigued to yield either to mirth or astonishment. They clap, however, much to the annoyance of the Elders.*

1ST ELDER (*to ABIGAIL*). These people have no idea of what they are clapping. They will never understand real art.

[IPHEGENIA *now comes out in earnest. She carries a Remington typewriter in one hand and a pound of Marquis' chocolates in the other. Both the Macdougals, of course, are in their usual costume. A small boy in a chlamys follows her with a tripod and a crevice, which he distributes on the platform. IPHEGENIA places her typewriter on the tripod and sits before it on the crevice. She interests herself in the chocolates. SARCOPHAGUS presents himself; the small boy takes up his stand on the floor with the Pythagoras lyre, which he exercises more or less in the spirit of a Greek chorus—when the artists come to a knot in the story.*

SARCOPHAGUS. Good morning, Miss Slowly.

IPHEGENIA. Ah, Mr. Jinks.

SARCOPHAGUS. I have come to tell you that I cannot come to-morrow . . . in the morning.

IPHEGENIA. Isn't that a shame. I had saved it for you. What about the afternoon ?

SARCOPHAGUS. I am awfully sorry about it. You shouldn't have saved it for me. I don't *think* I can arrange for the afternoon of *to-morrow* either.

IPHEGENIA. Oh, dear. I thought you would want the day. Well, I'll tell you : I can arrange it this afternoon if you like.

SARCOPHAGUS. I don't see how—really it is too bad. I might—let me see—perhaps—I wonder—it would be a little hard for me, *this* afternoon.

IPHEGENIA. Never mind. Let it be this morning, later. I can put off what I have.

SARCOPHAGUS. It is too kind. You are most generous. I have upset you awfully. Do forgive me.

IPHEGENIA. Then at eleven ?

SARCOPHAGUS. Honestly—I don't know what to do. You are so kind. It is my fault, it is all I can do to say so—but *not* at eleven.

IPHEGENIA. Don't apologise. I can give you a few hours right away, seeing that you are so busy.

SARCOPHAGUS. Oh, Miss Slowly !

IPHEGENIA. Say no more ; I should love to do it for you. You are my best client. If you *could* arrange it later, however.

SARCOPHAGUS. Oh, no ! I could not arrange it *later* !

IPHEGENIA. Then sit right down and we will do it now.

SARCOPHAGUS. But——

IPHEGENIA. Don't mind my ill humour.

SARCOPHAGUS. You are in a charming humour, only——

IPHEGENIA. It is you who see everything so cheerfully ! How many copies ?

SARCOPHAGUS. I really ought not——

IPHEGENIA. Ah, my dear Mr. Jinks, you are too thoughtful. After all, it is a small matter whether you come to-morrow—in the *morning*, or now. Your being so disturbed about it hurts me.

SARCOPHAGUS (*trying to smile*). I am sorry to hurt you. Believe me, I am not disturbed any more.

IPHEGENIA. Good. How many carbons did you say ?

SARCOPHAGUS (*desperately*). Two. (*He looks at his watch.*) There's a taxi waiting.

IPHEGENIA. Let me send the boy to discharge it.

SARCOPHAGUS. No, no ! It must wait to take me to the train. You see——

IPHEGENIA. You are in a hurry ?

SARCOPHAGUS. Very much so. I am going to be——

IPHEGENIA. Then let us waste no time. I am ready. Begin.

SARCOPHAGUS. What ?

IPHEGENIA. What have you brought ?

SARCOPHAGUS. Brought ? Oh, to dictate ?

IPHEGENIA. Yes.

SARCOPHAGUS. What have I brought to dictate !
Let me see—why, I left the papers at home !

IPHEGENIA. Do it from memory.

SARCOPHAGUS. Well, begin with the date.

[*He racks his brain for something to dictate.*]

IPHEGENIA. Waiting.

SARCOPHAGUS. We will call it “To-morrow—in the *Morning*.”

IPHEGENIA. What a droll coincidence.

SARCOPHAGUS. Isn't it ! It is about a man who was to be married in London ; that is, he was in Paris and she in London.

IPHEGENIA. Then how could they marry ?

SARCOPHAGUS. He tried to get there to do it.

IPHEGENIA. Did he succeed ?

SARCOPHAGUS. The story tells that. “De Vere was ready. His trunks were packed, his rooms were closed, his ticket was bought, and his taxicab waited below.”

IPHEGENIA. How modern.

SARCOPHAGUS (*becoming enthusiastic*). “His bride awaited him on the further shore, and but few hours separated them.”

IPHEGENIA. Is there a villain ?

SARCOPHAGUS. Yes.

IPHEGENIA. In a dress suit ?

SARCOPHAGUS. No ; in a crash gown.

[*IPHEGENIA is supposed to wear a crash gown.*
She jumps.

“De Vere crushed the wedding ring to his heart.

Then he jumped into the motor and away. But horror, the villain was not to be foiled."

IPHEGENIA. What villain?

SARCOPHAGUS. A stenographer called Slowly.

IPHEGENIA. I?

SARCOPHAGUS. "De Vere remembered his appointment with the stenographer and went to break it off. When he arrived at her office, she defeated him with words. He lost his train and lost his bride!"

[SARCOPHAGUS *bursts into tears.*

IPHEGENIA. How could you think of such a ghastly story, and why my name?

SARCOPHAGUS (*suddenly ferocious*). It is a true story. I have used your name because it is you and it is me and it is her!

IPHEGENIA (*rising*). I do not understand.

SARCOPHAGUS. Look! (*He pulls out his watch.*) It is half past ten! I have lost my train to London. I was to be married to-night. It is too late. My bride will marry Gaston Jemedebine-avec-le-cash. I have lost her! It is your fault!

IPHEGENIA. My fault? I went to great inconvenience to oblige you.

SARCOPHAGUS. Yes, so that a gentleman could not refuse your kindness.

IPHEGENIA. Why did not you say at once.

SARCOPHAGUS. I did, and then something made me say "in the *morning*"; but you might have seen. I was too chivalrous; I did not dare to hurt you,

and now I have lost my bride. You plotted this! You want to marry me yourself! I shall never marry now! You adventuress!

[He seizes IPHEGENIA by the hair.]

IPHEGENIA. Jinks! Mercy! I am innocent!

SARCOPHAGUS. I will kill you!

IPHEGENIA. Jinks! Listen! I am her!

SARCOPHAGUS. You are her?

IPHEGENIA (*tearing off her snood*). See! I hate Jemedebine-avec-le-cash! He pursued me, I fled, I came. Miss Slowly gave me this disguise. I am yours!

SARCOPHAGUS. My bride!

IPHEGENIA. Jinks!

[They fall into each other's arms. The small boy in the chlamys runs up and down his string dramatically. The tableau continues for applause; none coming, it disintegrates. IPHEGENIA walks backwards in a circle three times around the platform and SARCOPHAGUS does his best to get inside the crevice in order to hear the rest of the oracle. Then IPHEGENIA comes out of her frenzy and addresses SARCOPHAGUS.]

IPHEGENIA. Thus spake the oracle.

[Howls greet this remark, which unlocks the mystery for the public. SARCOPHAGUS is very indignant.]

SARCOPHAGUS. I see nothing to laugh at. These data are gleaned from the cave itself.

1ST ELDER. How disrespectful.

[He sets to work applauding.]

2ND ELDER. The public will never understand a real work of art.

[The Elders clap. The public become hysterical. SARCOPHAGUS attempts to expostulate, but only adds to the confusion. At this point HALLOWALL and DEVALOISE come into the grill-room.]

SCENE V

There is enough quiet for SARCOPHAGUS to speak.

SARCOPHAGUS. Ah! There is Mr. Pitts, the President of the Society of Elders! He will defend me.

HALLOWALL. What are you up to here?

SARCOPHAGUS. See how I am received by your friends!

HALLOWALL. My friends?

SARCOPHAGUS. Is this not the Ladies' Industrial Union?

HALLOWALL. This is the American House.

SARCOPHAGUS. What?

IPHEGENIA. What does this mean?

HALLOWALL. I ask the same of you.

SARCOPHAGUS. We have been played some horrid trick. Until this moment we believed ourselves dancing in the Educational Union; it is a scandal. I demand that you attend to it.

HALLOWALL. To what ?

SARCOPHAGUS. We have been abused ; we have been outraged ; our sacred dances have been taken from the elevated atmosphere of a cultured audience into the vulgar one of a bar-room. It is a practical joke which I do not understand as an artist. We have been outrageously treated ; I insist that you revenge us.

HALLOWALL. How did you get here ?

SARCOPHAGUS. Mr. Sevender brought 'us here, telling us that it was the Union ; we believed him. What his idea is in stupidly ridiculing us I do not know, but such things cannot occur unpunished.

HALLOWALL. I am sorry, Sarcophagus, but I do not see how I can defend you.

SARCOPHAGUS. Do you care nothing about the imposition your friends have suffered ?

HALLOWALL. I do, yet how can I help you ? You fell into the trap ; you are out of it again. It remains for you to retaliate.

SARCOPHAGUS (*coldly*). You are the one to show a firm hand in such disorder.

HALLOWALL. There is no disorder.

SARCOPHAGUS. Then you will let us go away humiliated and angry ?

HALLOWALL. I see no way of revenging you.

SARCOPHAGUS. I am as disillusioned as I am indignant. I was your guest and your friend ; you have insulted me as the former and deceived me as the latter. I shall never again give my dances in

Boston, and our acquaintanceship ends here, Mr. Pitts. You may regret this day. Come, Iphegenia.

ABIGAIL. Iphegenia! Don't be silly; you are too serious. Can't you see the joke!

IPHEGENIA. My sense of humour fails to appreciate this joke.

HALLOWALL. Where is the comic muse?

SARCOPHAGUS. Where she was after the performance of "Suzanna," no doubt. I gave my aid to you then; you fail me now. Good-bye.

[SARCOPHAGUS and IPHEGENIA, accompanied by the little boy, move toward the door.]

SMITH. How is your Mother?

[Everyone laughs and the MACDOUGALS stalk out icily.]

SCENE VI

The TZIGANES have come back in the meantime, and to restore order the HEAD WAITER sets them to work at once. By arrangement with ROBERT they begin playing the dance from "Suzanna." DEVALOISE, in connivance with ROBERT, like a horse of the Sybarites at the sound of Croton's music, unable to resist, obeys the summons, and in the midst of exceeding gaiety begins the dance. Such geniality rules that HALLOWALL never thinks of interfering nor demanding explanations, and he seats himself with the others to watch DEVALOISE. She dances the first three parts of the dance of "Suzanna," the argument of which is the following:

1st PART

The music and the dance represent the dawn of life. They are simple, joyful, and clear ; full of light, of hope, and of optimism. It is a state where introspection and experience have no place. It is not morbid.

2nd PART

The tragedy of life and of evolution is now discovered, with the realisation of the insignificance of individuality. Too much is known to allow happiness, and not enough to give contentment. The isolation of the soul assumes an exaggerated position, and the lack of belief in any end for life makes the latter impossible. Discontent, blindness, and sadness bring about the destruction of love and religion, together with the loss of youth.

3rd PART

A resolve is made to find or to make happiness. A joy in the symbolism of life and of ideas is founded upon things which are well known to be untrue. There is a reaction against knowledge and science which strangles thought with its realities. All joy is in the present, and it is based upon a despair which seizes upon nothing but images. Nevertheless it is a happiness civilised, complicated, and full of rich experience. It is the gaiety of a ball.

As DEVALOISE is about to commence the fourth part of the dance, the door is thrown open and a number of policemen follow a sergeant of police who comes down the steps. The music suddenly breaks off ; DEVALOISE stops, and everyone stares at the intruders.

SCENE VII

SERGEANT. All who are in the room are under arrest for performing, permitting, or attending a public exhibition of dancing after twelve o'clock at night.

[ROBERT *instantly reaches for a switch which is near him and turns out all the lights in the grill-room. In the confusion which follows, he seizes DEVALOISE, and they both escape.*

SCENE VIII

When the lights are re-lit, HALLOWALL, ABIGAIL, SMITH, VALENTINE, and the two Elders are firmly handcuffed, and the police have mastered the situation.

SERGEANT. Is Mr. Hallowall Pitts present ?

HALLOWALL. He is.

SERGEANT. I have a communication to impart to him. [He gives HALLOWALL a letter.

HALLOWALL (*breaking the envelope*). From Orson, I suppose.

ABIGAIL. What does he say ?

HALLOWALL (*reading*). "You will be instantly liberated and this affair silenced under these conditions : that 'Suzanna' is played freely in Boston, that Mr. Sevender is elected a member of the

Society of Elders, and that I marry Faith. Otherwise you all pass the night in the police station."

ABIGAIL. Good heavens! I thought he was married.

VALENTINE. He isn't; that was part of the game.

ABIGAIL. But Bob!

VALENTINE. Mr. Sevender and Miss Orchard were married this evening at the theatre.

HALLOWALL. This is too much. I will not allow Faith to marry an artist. All of his conditions are impossible—quite impossible.

ABIGAIL. Won't you ever see what a fool you are, Hallowall?

HALLOWALL. He is a blackmailer!

ABIGAIL. Hallowall! Think of prison!

SMITH. Hallowall! And a trial!

VALENTINE. Hallowall! And the scandal of being arrested here!

ABIGAIL. Use your common sense and make up with those boys.

SMITH. Oh, Mr. Pitts! Do come to an understanding with them; it would be horrid to go to prison.

HALLOWALL. I am ashamed to yield!

ABIGAIL. Why? Look at the Macdougals! If they had laughed, it would have been all right. They were hateful—they had no sense of humour. I have no ill feeling toward Orson or Bob.

SMITH. It would be so much nicer if you made

friends with them and let them do as they like ; then they would leave us alone.

HALLOWALL. It is the fact that they have beaten me that makes me obstinate. I care nothing about " Suzanna."

ABIGAIL. Don't be like the Macdougals and the Elders. It is not fair to keep us in prison all night ; and then your position is untenable. You have been arrested in a vulgar café at an illegal dance like any carouser. We have all been clowns.

SMITH. You will disgrace yourself and the Society if it is ever known that you were arrested here.

ABIGAIL. Hallowall, we are vanquished. Let us ask mercy of our conquerors ; there is no alternative for us.

HALLOWALL. Well, I suppose not. It is maddening to be caged like this ; but wait ! I will get it back on those scoundrels ! I submit now, but they shall pay for it. " Suzanna " may be given, Sevender may become an Elder, and Orson may marry Faith, but I wait patiently for my opportunity. They are worthy enemies and worthy allies ! Sergeant, tell Mr. Orson that we grant his conditions ; so set us free.

[The SERGEANT takes off the handcuffs of his prisoners.]

SERGEANT. At your orders, Mr. Pitts !

SCENE IX

*As the SERGEANT and the POLICEMEN withdraw,
GAULBERT, FAITH, DEVALOISE, and ROBERT
come in.*

FAITH (*throwing herself into HALLOWALL's arms*).
Father!

GAULBERT (*doing likewise with ABIGAIL*). Mother!
HALLOWALL. You cubs!

ABIGAIL. Long live "Suzanna"!

ROBERT. Waiter! Bring us half a dozen partridges and——

VALENTINE. Plenty of tête-a-tête.

*[The Curtain falls as they seat themselves for
supper and as the TZIGANES recommence the
dance of "Suzanna" as a background
for exceeding cordiality.]*

THE END OF THE PLAY

A MAN OF PRINCIPLE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

TO

JAMES KEITH CLEMENT

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

EDGAR STANDISH, General of the Eastern Division
of the U. S. Army.

ZOÉ STANDISH, his wife.

PAUL MORTMOOR.

MAJOR SCOTT.

COLONEL RICHARDSON.

LIEUTENANT MEYER.

SLOW.

The action occurs at Boston, in the year 1916.

A MAN OF PRINCIPLE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

THE PLAY

THE library of General Standish's house at Boston. On the left is a double door, standing open on to a flight of steps which leads to a garden. In the rear wall is a fireplace, and on the right one a door communicating with the rest of the house. Book-cases occupy the wall space. Placed diagonally in the left-hand corner before the book-cases is a desk ; in the same position, in the right-hand corner, is a sofa. In the middle of the room is a table on which burns an oil lamp. There are chairs about the table and others near the doors. The room is sombre in tone, and there is no other light than the lamp, except for a dull moonlight that comes in at the garden door. One of the drawers of the desk is half open, and on the table are some papers. A dying fire glows in the fireplace.

SCENE I

PAUL MORTMOOR *enters slowly by the garden door. He is smoking. He walks to the table and glances at the papers lying there. Then he picks them up carelessly, and after a casual study of them, tears them up with a laugh.*

He carries the pieces to the fireplace and throws them on the coals, where they burn, and the ashes rise on the draught up the chimney. As he stands reflecting before the fire Zoé comes in by the other door.

ZOÉ. Have you seen Edgar, Paul ?

PAUL. Not since dinner.

ZOÉ. The others have not come ?

PAUL. No.

ZOÉ. I am afraid it will be a long evening. Why don't you go out if you wish.

PAUL. I do not need to be amused. Are you busy now ?

ZOÉ. No. I am worried though, terribly worried. Let us talk. *[They sit down on the sofa.]*

PAUL. About Edgar ? There is no need of worrying on his account, Zoé. It is the soldier, not the officer, who is in danger in war.

ZOÉ. No, not now—I mean I am upset by the whole thing. A war with England is the last thing I had expected. The Mexican campaign was not so alarming, and I was with Edgar ; but this one means separation—and perhaps death.

PAUL. Well, what can America expect ? She has for fourteen years insulted foreign nations, and Great Britain in particular.

ZOÉ. I know it. Yet one never believes.

PAUL. You know my ideas on war, but I do not blame England for what she is doing, although I

would do anything to prevent it. And I fear for the Republic, because the war will not be like the Boer war, where a thinly-populated country was defended against marching troops by mounted men.

Zoé. Who would have imagined for a moment two years ago that any European army would attempt to march on Chicago ?

PAUL. No American. Yet, as the English say, they have never had time to give undivided attention to an American war. At the end of the Revolution they were fighting France, Spain, Portugal, and Holland—all the maritime nations at once—and it was the deprivation of their command of the sea by them which ultimately secured American independence.

Zoé. Even Fiske hates to realise that. The average American imagines that his Republic was founded on sublime heroism against irresistible power.

PAUL. During the war of 1812 England was engaged against Napoleon, and the colonial war was only a detail. Since then the United States have only fought third-rate powers, such as Spain and Mexico. The entire coast on the Pacific and Atlantic is inadequately protected, both by men and guns, and the regular army is only 50,000 strong. You know how utterly unfit for war the population of the Eastern coast is by the failure to raise any troops in New England ; they are certainly not like the Boers, and although America may raid Canada

before the war really commences, what will that mean in comparison to the loss of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore ?

Zoé. I do not understand why Germany allows the English fleet to go.

PAUL. Because England will give her a free hand in South America. That would forever destroy the Monroe doctrine, no matter what the result of the war. At least England's allies in Asia will be glad to see the Sandwich Islands free again.

Zoé. I agree with Great Britain for resenting our taking advantage of her friendship. Germany and Japan would not have allowed it.

PAUL. She feebly protested for a long time—long enough for us to have been warned, before taking this step.

Zoé. I hate war.

PAUL (*laughing*). It is too bad that it must be directed against what little good material physical evolution has to work with. If it destroyed the unfit, as natural conflict does, or if it turned its energy to warring with the true enemies of man, or if it spent its extra force on breaking natural energy to the bit, then it would be noble, but as it is it is puerile and humiliating. Once it was for life ; now it is for money.

Zoé. Yes, and we have not even an airship to help us. I wonder why we are so far behind in aeronautics ?

Paul. The only reason we are in advance in in-

vention and machinery is because there is money in them. There is none in aeroplanes ; but here is our shortsightedness : for there is money in them in case of war when the outcome is money. Does France have a revenue from her air navy ? On the contrary, she sinks millions in it, to the loss of her sea navy, and although as always she dashes ahead through dismaying lessons, although she thus teaches the duller nations at her expense, she always justifies herself materially.

ZOÉ. We are not deep thinkers as a race.

PAUL. The West is. Not only New England but the entire Eastern coast of the United States is physically, morally, and intellectually degenerate. One hears a great deal to-day about the Puritan decadence ; but it applies to the southern and middle states as well. You speak of athletics, and it means an unhealthy over-development which turns to fat in an office. You speak of virility, and it means excess. You speak of family, and it means insanity or deformity. The cut of their features is ignorance. They are perverse in customs as well as free ; their point of view about life and love is shocking, and they do not know what death means. They never bother about religion or philosophy, unless they fit in their after-dinner coffee cups. The meanings of socialism and individualism are hidden to them. Their moral qualities are formulas, and they have no courage to either defend their hearths or to take their eyes off them. At

the same time, they are cold, critical, cruel, and unforgiving. They condemn and are intolerant of others. They think themselves models for humanity if they earn their livings, marry, and are good citizens—all which qualities are fulfilled by any labourer. They shun anything above this level. As to the intellectual state in the East, it is dead. The best music is to be heard here, but it is exotic. The only genuine music of America is presented by George Cohen. New England neither produces nor supports artists, and she creates not a single thing with her head. It is impossible for the mind to awaken in the presence of so many bankers. Those that are not clerks are guardians of museums, and beauty of any sort is unthinkable among them. No one writes, no one paints, no one carves, no one sings or even dances here; architecture is bottled and science is preserved. As to government—(*he gets up angrily*) I am sorry I came back here.

[He walks back and forth.]

ZOÉ. I understand your feelings, Paul. I am not blindly patriotic.

PAUL. I am.

ZOÉ. Will you not fight?

PAUL. Not unless I have to. Only voluntary enlistment is the order so far. I shall fight with my pen until the sword is put into my hand.

ZOÉ. I should be mad to smell powder.

PAUL. I am. It is all I can do to control the passion I have for war. But I do not believe in it,

and so I hold back. The excitement and meaning of it all intoxicates me.

ZoÉ. It doesn't me. What is to happen to our homes and fortunes? Where will be our incomes and our families? It is such a dismal outlook that it forbids panic.

[She gets up and goes slowly towards the table. She drums her fingers on it absently for a moment, and then suddenly starts. She looks around the table and casts a rapid glance at PAUL, who has not watched her. Then she collects herself and stands thinking for a moment.]

Paul, how long had you been in the room before I arrived?

PAUL. No more than two minutes.

ZoÉ. Had anyone been here before you?

PAUL. No one came out the door to the garden. If you were in the other side of the house you would have met anyone going out the other door.

[ZoÉ reflects an instant and then moves over to PAUL. She stands before him, close to him, and looks up at him.]

ZoÉ. Give them to me.

PAUL. What?

ZoÉ (*impatiently*). Oh, nonsense! Do not let us lie.

PAUL. I don't know what you mean.

ZoÉ. I have no patience. You know very well what I mean. You have no right to them.

PAUL. But, my dear Zoé !

Zoé. Paul, I insist on your giving them to me. You have no idea what importance they have. It may mean the extermination of us all.

PAUL. Good heavens ! But I have nothing of yours. Tell me what it is and I will help you, if you have lost anything.

Zoé. Lost ! Either you are a—— (*She stops and walks nervously to the garden door.*) How much will you sell them for ?

PAUL (*angrily*). I think you are mad. If you cannot talk intelligibly I cannot understand you. I am not a blackmailer.

Zoé (*turning and going quickly to him*). Forgive me, Paul. (*She takes his hand.*) I am nervous and hysterical to-night. Do you blame me ? Think of what the war means to me. Edgar may be—wounded, you may be killed, the whole city destroyed. For a woman it is frightful to sit down and watch. I am on the point of giving in to tears, and so you must forgive me.

[She sobs and clings to his hand. He presses hers warmly.]

PAUL. Never mind, Zoé. I am sorry to have spoken sharply. Come, be defiant.

Zoé. Oh, it is all the harder when you sympathise with me ! I have had so many problems to solve. I am so tired !

PAUL. It is only for the moment, child.

Zoé. Things look so impossible, Paul.

[She gives in to her tears and PAUL leads her to the sofa, where she has a mild attack of hysterics.]

PAUL. Life is never impossible. Tell me, what have you lost ?

Zoé. You are young, and a man—and strong. I am helpless and my happiness is in things that escape me. *[She is overcome by tears.]*

PAUL. No one can deny a woman happiness. The things you love will come back to you.

Zoé. No, no, no, no. I am alone, alone, alone.

[She has an excess of tears and falls sobbing against the back of the sofa. PAUL takes her hands.]

PAUL. Zoé, be a woman. Don't act so before me. You know I am always your friend.

Zoé *(laughing wildly)*. Ha !

[She continues to laugh and then suddenly becomes serious.]

Paul, I love you. Yes, yes ; don't be surprised. You alone give me sympathy and love. I know how you feel toward me *(PAUL starts)* and how you have tried to cover it. Don't—why should we. I love you, Paul.

[She puts her hands on his shoulders.]

PAUL. But, Zoé, you are mistaken. I never loved you.

Zoé. Oh, Paul, you cannot deceive me. Acts are

stronger than words. I have watched you, dear, and know.

PAUL. But I could not, Zoé, it would not be honest.

ZoÉ. Such love as ours is above principles. Edgar is a man of principle. Perhaps that is why he never loved me as you have.

PAUL. Zoé, you must not talk so. Really, I'm your friend. I do not love you, not that way.

ZoÉ. Do you remember Alvan in the Tragic Comedians? He was a man of principle. He was too strong and so fell; but you are stronger in knowing when to concede to the modification of principles. Edgar would not. You see I am willing to give all—all, I say—no matter what—even—— But you really must give me those things—I love you.

[She puts her arms about his neck.]

PAUL (*wishing to unclasp her hands*). I cannot take your love, Zoé, because I do not love you. As to—"those things"; I do not understand you.

ZoÉ (*whispering*). Paul—come—to-night—you know—bring the papers. I will give all for them—all—all! I love you. But I must have those papers. I will give myself for the papers. I say I love you.

[She sinks into his arms.]

SCENE II

The door on the right is suddenly opened and STANDISH enters in time to hear ZOÉ's last sentence and to see her fall on PAUL's breast. Neither of the two see him.

STANDISH. I am sorry to disturb you.

[ZOÉ starts to her feet and PAUL rises slowly.]
You may now explain to me what this means.

[There is a moment of silence. ZOÉ looks at PAUL, first in alarm and then with cruelty in her eyes. PAUL gazes directly at STANDISH.]

PAUL. I love Zoé.

STANDISH. You puppy !

[He lifts his hand and is about to strike PAUL, when SCOTT, RICHARDSON, and MEYER come in behind him.]

SCENE III

STANDISH *regains his presence and walks towards the fireplace.*

STANDISH. Will you leave us the room, please, Zoé ? We have important business to conduct, and must be left alone.

[ZOÉ goes out. PAUL follows her slowly and shuts the door behind him. STANDISH

closes and locks that to the garden, which excludes the moonlight and makes the room still gloomier. He draws the curtains over the door, and, walking over to the other one, locks it as well.

Will you be seated ?

[He designates the table and seats himself at it, as do the others.]

I wish to resolve to-night that all men fit for service shall immediately be enlisted. Have you anything to propose on this matter, Major Scott ?

SCOTT. Camps and supplies must then be gotten ready at the same time to accommodate them. Then, again, if the conscription is too large, it will be unmanageable, and there will be no one left to furnish supplies. Perhaps the enrolment, in the beginning at least, should be restricted to men between twenty and thirty, who are not directly occupied by agriculture or other matters productive of military necessities.

RICHARDSON. That is true, but we must remember that commerce and manufacture are now crippled, and that millions of men have been thrown out of employment. They must live, and the best way to look after them is to start them at once to be trained. I should suggest that the enrolment continue voluntary. The ranks are increasing daily, with just such material as I have said, who are serious and quick to obey. This will allow the officers to assort their men. It does not seem to me that we

are prepared to handle a general enlistment, and as more activity is killed, more men will enroll.

MEYER. My objection to that is that the men will not present themselves fast enough, even after all work is ended, for nearly every workman has some money saved up, and he will live on that until it gives out. This leaves us in a state of ignorance as to our probable forces, and will give the unpatriotic a chance to hurt us by deserting or turning to anything rather than serve. I am of the opinion of General Standish—that for a certain class enlistment shall now be compulsory.

SCOTT. And I. I think that even on this first day of formal declaration of war we should lose no time in getting ready. I propose that all men between twenty and thirty, who are fit, shall immediately be enrolled.

MEYER. I yield to your decision and approve of it.

STANDISH. I commission you, Lieutenant Meyer, to see to the carrying out of this decision. (*He stands up.*) I have now to go over the plans of the fortifications of New York Harbour with you.

[He goes to the desk and searches through several piles of papers, which he takes out of a locked drawer. Not finding what he seeks, he looks down and sees the drawer which is half open. He stares at it a moment and then hastily looks in it. He straightens himself up and goes to the door]

*on the right ; with his hand on the knob
he turns to the other men.*

Excuse my interrupting you for a moment.

*[The others nod and he unlocks the door, which
he opens.*

Zoé ! *(There is no answer.)* Zoé !

Zoé *(in the next room)*. Yes ?

STANDISH. Come here a moment, please.

SCENE IV

Zoé enters

Zoé. Well ?

STANDISH. Who opened that drawer in my desk ?

Zoé. I am sure I do not know. I had not noticed that it was open.

STANDISH. You know nothing about it ?

Zoé. No.

STANDISH. Who has been in this room since dinner ?

Zoé. Possibly the butler.

STANDISH. Call him.

Zoé. Very well.

*[She goes out and STANDISH walks back and
forth.*

SCENE V

In a few moments Zoé returns with the butler

STANDISH. Slow, have you been in this room since dinner ?

SLOW. No, sir. Coffee was served in the music room. I have not left the pantry since then.

STANDISH (*looking at him searchingly*). I believe you. You may go.

SLOW. Very good, sir. [*He goes out.*]

SCENE VI

STANDISH. Zoé, you have been here since dinner and so has Mortmoor. I have found the drawer of my desk unlocked and some papers gone. Either you or he have taken them. You swear that you know nothing of them ?

Zoé. I swear it—but Mr. Mortmoor is equally ignorant of them. He was in the garden all the time I was not in the room.

STANDISH. Call him.

Zoé. It is useless, Edgar. Don't bother him, he knows nothing about your papers.

STANDISH. Call him.

Zoé. Oh, if you insist. (*She goes to the door and calls.*) Mr. Mortmoor !

PAUL (*from the next room*). Do you want me ?

Zoé. Yes, please come here a moment.

SCENE VII

PAUL *comes in*

STANDISH. You may leave us now, Zoé.

Zoé. Why should I not stay ? Surely you can have nothing to say to Paul that I may not hear ? He will tell you one word in answer to your questions and that will be all.

STANDISH. We shall see. Please leave us.

Zoé. He knows nothing of your papers.

STANDISH. Go !

[He points to the door, and Zoé walks out coldly. STANDISH locks the door.]

SCENE VIII

STANDISH. Will you please be seated, Mr. Mortmoor ? I have some questions to ask you.

PAUL. If you wish.

[He takes one of the chairs at the table and STANDISH resumes his seat.]

STANDISH. Mr. Mortmoor, I have found the drawer to my desk open and certain papers gone. I was here immediately after dinner and put them in there. Since then nobody but my wife and you have been in the room. She swears that she knows nothing of them. I accuse you, therefore, of taking them. Will you please say what you have to refute the accusation ?

PAUL. I know nothing about the drawer or the nature of your papers. If you will be more specific I can answer you.

STANDISH. There is no need of procrastinating. There is the drawer. (*He points at it.*) The papers were plans of the fortifications of New York Harbour.

PAUL. I did not open the drawer, nor see it until now. I found lying on this table, at the disposal of any thief, the plans which I presume you speak of. I burned them up.

STANDISH (*horrified*). Burned them up ?

[*The other men rise in consternation and lean forward towards PAUL.*]

SCOTT. Burned them up ?

PAUL. Yes. No one, far less an army officer, has the right to leave such documents around in that careless manner. I was not willing to endanger myself, even for five minutes, in carrying them, to give to General Standish, who I suppose left them there. Knowing that they could be easily duplicated by the General, I took the simplest step and destroyed them.

STANDISH. But they cannot be duplicated. They are the originals. There is not an exact reproduction of them even at Washington.

PAUL. I am very sorry. I did not know from the way they were treated that they were valuable.

STANDISH (*standing up*). Do you suppose that I left them on that table ?

PAUL. You must have. Who else could have ?

STANDISH. I told you I locked them up in that drawer after dinner. It was you who left them on the table, or rather took them out of that drawer.

PAUL. Is my word of no value ? I say I found them on the table and burned them up in that grate.

STANDISH. Then I lie ?

[He walks over to the fireplace and looks at the coals.]

PAUL. I do not know.

STANDISH. Scott, these coals have not been stirred for at least three hours. If anything, even paper, had been burned on them, the ashes would be there.

[SCOTT, RICHARDSON, and MEYER go to the fireplace. PAUL remains seated.]

SCOTT. Certainly.

STANDISH. There are none. What have you to say, Mr. Mortmoor ?

PAUL. The ashes drifted up the chimney. I watched them.

STANDISH *(coming forward)*. That sounds very plausible, but I do not believe it in conjunction with your story about the drawer. Scott, I accuse Mortmoor of stealing those plans in order to sell them to the English. If he has not got them on him, then he has already despatched them. Search him.

PAUL. You are at perfect liberty to do so.

[He takes off his coat. SCOTT searches through it, while MEYER examines the rest of his clothing.]

STANDISH. Richardson, help me to search the room.

[RICHARDSON and STANDISH inspect the principal objects in the room, turn back the rug, &c.]

SCOTT. There is nothing on him.

RICHARDSON. Nor in the room.

STANDISH. Then he has sent them off already. Under any conditions I constitute him a prisoner, for someone must answer for those plans. We shall see what a Court Martial will make of his argument. Please handcuff him, Scott. He must not be allowed to escape.

SCOTT. I shall have to use a belt.

PAUL. Oh, do not be afraid I shall run away.

STANDISH. Bind him, then, and I shall ask you to leave me with him alone for a few minutes. Perhaps I can offer suggestions which will make him change his mind.

[SCOTT binds PAUL's hands behind his back.]

RICHARDSON. Shall we go into the next room?

STANDISH. I shall call you.

[SCOTT, RICHARDSON, and MEYER go out by the door on the right, which STANDISH unlocks for them and locks again when they are gone.]

SCENE IX

STANDISH *turns and walks quickly to PAUL, who has sat down upon the sofa*

STANDISH. Now I want to know the truth about what you have done with those plans.

PAUL. If you treat me as a traitor, you already think me one, and there is no use my defending myself.

STANDISH. You are one, even in having burned the papers, as you confess. That is nonsense. One lie is as easy as another. You have made one about the drawer, and I cannot believe you have not made use of the plans. I have said nothing about you and Zoé, and that incident makes it hard for me to be relentless now. However, duty forces me to hold you for those plans, in spite of the delicacy of our relations. By God, if you do not yield them before you leave this room or tell me what you have done with them—I will kill you.

PAUL. You are mad, Standish. I am willing to defend myself in regard to your wife, and no Court would kill me for an accident. Those papers met a kinder fate in the fire than they might have when left as I found them.

STANDISH (*boiling with rage*). Suppose I believe you when you say you burned the papers? Does that make my position any easier? I tell you the whole war may turn on that one act. But I do not believe you—it is incredible. In the first place,

the plans could not have been on the table, and no man of your intelligence could be so ingenuous as to burn them. I repeat, I do not believe you, and you have them. I command you to give them up. If you do not, I will kill you as a traitor and a criminal.

PAUL (*doggedly*). I have not got your papers.

STANDISH (*shaking him by the head*). The Inquisition knew how to find out the truth. Do you confess ?

PAUL. Don't be brutal. I have not your papers, I tell you.

STANDISH (*violently*). We shall see !

[*He applies his hands to PAUL's throat and tightens them deliberately. PAUL struggles as he is strangled, but is helpless, with his hands tied, and STANDISH forces him back against the sofa, so that only his legs are free. It is only a minute before he weakens and then STANDISH loosens his hold.*]

Where are they ?

[PAUL *shakes his head feebly, but obstinately, and, carried away by anger, STANDISH renews his hold. PAUL suddenly collapses, after a feeble struggle, and STANDISH throws him down on the sofa. He stands looking at him a moment to realise what he has done. Then he goes to the door, unlocks it, and calls.*]

Scott, Richardson, Meyer !

SCENE X

The three officers come in

STANDISH. I have killed a traitor !

[The other men look at him incredulously and then hurry over to the sofa, where they find PAUL dead.]

Take me ! I am willing to suffer the consequences.

SCOTT. Standish !

RICHARDSON. Jove !

MEYER. Close the door. No one must know of this. *[SCOTT closes the door.]*

RICHARDSON. How did you do it ?

STANDISH. I have no excuse. He would not confess and I forgot myself. Hand me over to the authorities.

MEYER. No, that is impossible. What would be done without you ? No one could fill your place. You are indispensable. Did you see La Flambée ? A French officer killed a spy and felt justified in not confessing it. This must be hushed up, that is all. At least until after the war.

SCOTT. If he was a traitor, he would have been shot. You have only carried out his execution. Of course, you must not let this be known.

STANDISH. But the plans ? How am I to account for the loss ? Suppose they find them in the hands of the English, what would be said ? Someone might forge a letter to incriminate me.

RICHARDSON. You are a man of principle, Standish. You are unimpeachable. A word of any sort of explanation will suffice to account for the lost plans, and we must simply wait until new ones can be made. Do not worry on that score.

STANDISH. I am a man of principle. Yes—you see I am a man of principle, and even if they found a letter that someone had concocted, they would not believe it.

SCOTT. Of course not. If they have sold the plans, it is very likely some such piece of blackmail will be tried. We will defend you there.

STANDISH. Thanks. Then you think it best for me not to give myself up on account of——

MEYER. You must not. You have committed no crime, and you are necessary to your country.

STANDISH. If I were not a man of principle——

SCOTT. That is being a man of principle.

RICHARDSON. What shall we do with the body?

STANDISH. We can bury it in the garden. The ground is soft. (*He unlocks the door to the garden and the moon is seen hanging full just above the horizon.*) Behind the hollyhocks. Bring it out.

[SCOTT and RICHARDSON gather up PAUL's body and carry it out, followed by STANDISH. MEYER stays behind to have a final look about the room.]

SCENE XI

He inspects the table, the chairs, the sofa, and the fireplace. Then he comes to the desk and pulls out the half-opened drawer. He shakes it upside down and a paper falls out of it. He puts the drawer down and picks up the paper, which he carries to the lamp to read. Then he whistles softly and walks over to the door.

MEYER. Scott ! Here a moment.

[After a pause SCOTT enters from the garden.]

SCENE XII

SCOTT. What is it ?

MEYER. Read that.

[He gives the paper to SCOTT, who takes it to the lamp and reads it. When he has finished, he looks up at MEYER.]

SCOTT. Not a forgery ?

MEYER. Impossible ! There has not been time for anyone to make a forgery.

SCOTT. Call Richardson.

[As MEYER goes toward the door, RICHARDSON and STANDISH come in.]

SCENE XIII

STANDISH. Aren't you going to help us ?

MEYER. I wanted to show you how he got into that drawer.

[He makes a sign to SCOTT, who gives the letter to RICHARDSON. He reads it while STANDISH is at the desk with MEYER. When he has read the letter, he looks at SCOTT in amazement.]

SCOTT. I guess it is about finished, Standish.

STANDISH. He had the key—a key.

SCOTT. Your little game is over.

STANDISH *(turning)*. What do you mean ?

SCOTT *(holding up the letter)*. This puts another light on the matter, that is all.

STANDISH *(going forward and reaching for the letter)*. What is it ?

SCOTT. It is an agreement made by you to sell the plans of the fortifications of New York Harbour to the English Government.

STANDISH. I told you he would do that. You heard me say that no one would believe such a thing because I am a man of principle, and you promised to stand by me. It is a forgery !

SCOTT. There has been no time to make such a forgery. It is entirely in your own peculiar handwriting.

STANDISH. It shall be proved that I never wrote that letter.

SCOTT. Things look pretty dark against you, however. The plans disappear, you accuse three people and kill one of them; then this letter appears. It looks to me like a rather slender chance of escape on the supposition that this letter is forged, and the Courts will not justify us in allowing any irregularity. You permitted none. You go to prison to-night and the others will decide your case.

STANDISH. Very well. I shall go to prison and I am not afraid to die.

SCENE XIV

The door on the right opens in time for Zoë to hear the last words as she comes in. She stands motionless by the table.

ZOË. I know all that has happened. I have heard nearly every word. Edgar, you shall not go to prison and you shall not die.

SCOTT. You have not read this letter. There is no hope for him. He is a blackguard.

ZOË (*furiously*). Be silent! He is not! I wrote that letter. (*All four men stare at her, thunderstruck.*) Oh, do not stare at me so (*desperately*). Yes, I wrote that letter and I stole the plans. I left them in my hurry on this table. The letter fell out into the drawer. Paul did burn them, but he did not steal them. Edgar is innocent. Why did I do it? Because I love Edgar. Yes, because I love him, do

you understand? I say I love him. But what was my love? Hell. He never saw me, never noticed me, was away more than half the time, spent the rest on his army, and so I was alone with all my love. I wanted him to depend upon me for a little, for all—everything. I wanted him to be kept alive by the beating of my heart. I wanted to possess him—you don't know what love is—and he was where I could give him nothing. What did I do? I was going to send those plans, with the letter, anonymously, to the President. Edgar would have been degraded, disgraced, deprived of his rank, his country, everything—and made utterly dependent upon me for his very life. Wasn't it worth it? What is glory and success to a woman who loves? She wants to possess the man she loves, and I did my best. I loved him enough to cripple him to keep him by me. I have failed—I have lost him. Oh, God, how I love you, Edgar.

STANDISH. Love! Oh! The monster! The beast! It is you who are answerable for Mortmoor's life. You said you loved him.

ZoÉ. No! I thought he had the plans to hurt you, and I tried to win them that way.

STANDISH. Take her! Kill her! But first she shall suffer the reward of her love before she answers for her loathsome nature. Hold her, Scott.

[The men seize her roughly. STANDISH draws a revolver from his pocket and shoots himself.]

Zoë (*fighting*). Oh! No! No! No! No! Not that! Not that!

[STANDISH *falls dead and the men drag Zoë brutally out of the room as the curtain falls. Out in the street beyond the garden a hand-organ suddenly strikes up a popular waltz.*

THE END

TONREHL AND YLANDE

AN IMPROVISATION IN THREE PARTS
WITH A PRELUDE

TO

MY SISTER, ROSAMOND

VOICES

TONREHL, a labourer.
YLANDE, a young girl.
BOLOCLOTE, a knight.
SELADOR, a prince.
GREELFORT, the head.
MORKAN, the heart.
DORLAS, the body.
JANOÖN, a dancer.
KISNEL, a painter.
ANLYPH, an architect.
MELENAÏS, a musician.
BORTH, a sculptor.
AMNAE, a writer.
YPÊME, the Seventh Artist.
Two Spiders.
Two Lovers.
A Mother and her Son.
Four Dragons.
Two Dancers.

The time and place of action are imaginary.

PRELUDE

By a stream in a grove.

ACT I

SCENE I. A Dungeon in Boloclote's Castle.

- „ II. The Valley of the Seven Mountains and Morkan's Cave.
- „ III. Dorlas' Rose Garden.
- „ IV. Greelfort's Season.
- „ V. The Dungeon.

ACT II

- „ I. The Cavern of Janoön.
- „ II. Kisnel's Mountain.
- „ III. The City of Anlyph.
- „ IV. Melenais' Kingdom.
- „ V. The Dungeon.

ACT III

- „ I. The Bridge of the Four Dragons.
- „ II. Borth's meadow.
- „ III. On the top of the Seventh Mountain.
- „ IV. The Dungeon.

TONREHL AND YLANDE

'AN IMPROVISATION IN THREE PARTS
WITH A PRELUDE

PRELUDE

On the left a spring trickles down a wall of stone, dripping clearly from one clump of mossy verdure to another and hanging in strings to a pool. From this latter a brook moves pleasantly away to the edge of a cliff on the right, over which it vanishes, giving rise to a mist that hangs, motionless, against a brilliant panorama beyond. The scene is rich with green light that is reflected from the trunks and foliage of an ancient grove. Alleys, closed by deepening shades, offer mysterious perspectives, and the atmosphere seems to be faceted like the surface of an emerald. About the mist over the cliff the trees surge heavily and are black against the distance, which is scaled by thread-like rills and the hills of which are mottled with cloud shadows. Without, the sun is violent ; within, it is cool, and dusk reigns upon soft banks. YLANDE is sitting at the edge of the pool playing with her hair. Presently TONREHL clambers up over the cliff from the water and mist and is outlined, with his wet clothing clinging to him, by the light. He does not see YLANDE, who has risen to her feet, until a horn

is heard blowing within the forest, when he runs forward to the pool and halts astonished before her. She gazes at him unseeingly. He draws back.

YLANDE. The brook is fainting down its course beneath pale air.

TONREHL. It is the stream of life. You must not stay here.

YLANDE. Silence and incense turn among the trees. What is this forest ?

TONREHL. It is the forest of death, and you must fly.

YLANDE. I am weary of wandering. The water trembles and the leaves are falling beyond. I cannot go.

TONREHL. Peace is more beautiful than death or life, and you will not find it here.

YLANDE. There is peace in the pool where leaves are balanced motionless on purple dust and washed with red wine like the blood of men. See, their thin colours fade into shadow. I am going to dip my feet among them.

TONREHL (*seizing her arm*). No ! No ! You may not dip your feet into the pool.

YLANDE. Love is more beautiful than the sun, for its light is dead and life half dies within it. I must be happy or I should not live, for peace is not happiness.

TONREHL. You must be happy without happiness. Who are you ?

YLANDE. I do not know. I am lost, and they told me to come this way. Who are you ?

TONREHL. I work down in the valley where this stream falls, and at night I come to bathe in the pool.

YLANDE. I shall bathe with you.

TONREHL. No, it is forbidden. Even the forest is denied to you who have known liberty.

YLANDE. They told me I should find it here.

TONREHL. It is not here.

YLANDE. Then I shall dip my feet into your pool.

TONREHL. You must not ! (*She runs to the pool and is about to enter it when TONREHL grasps her and draws her back.*) Listen ! You are mad. Do you not know the penalty for tasting these waters ?

YLANDE (*throwing back her hair*). No, what is it ?

TONREHL. You shall be imprisoned and shall dream until you find the seventh art. Then you will die.

YLANDE. Will you be with me ?

TONREHL. Alas ! We shall die together. They gave me this stream to guard and its pollution means my death. I am very happy in the valley. Do not then destroy my solitude when your own joy lies beyond the forest.

YLANDE. Imprisonment and dreams and death ! Where will you be until we die ?

TONREHL. I shall seek you.

YLANDE. The water is very green. Let me dip one foot into it. Surely that can do no wrong.

TONREHL. Not even a hair.

YLANDE. Who will imprison me ?

TONREHL. His horn blew in the woods a moment ago. His name is Boloclothe.

YLANDE. Let me watch you bathe. I shall not move.

TONREHL. You ought to go.

YLANDE. I wish to rest here while you bathe.

TONREHL. Then will you go ?

[YLANDE nods. TONREHL slips off his wet clothes and enters the pool. He stands knee-deep, bending to pour the water over him, and does not see YLANDE. She sits down on the bank and while singing gently a wordless song, combs out her hair with her fingers. BOLOCLOTE'S horn is heard again in the forest. YLANDE starts and utters a cry.]

TONREHL (*turning towards her*). His horn sounds nearer.

YLANDE. It was not that.

[TONREHL continues bathing and YLANDE laughs gaily to herself. Then she creeps noiselessly down to the pool and dips a strand of her hair into the water. It drifts over to TONREHL and curls about his legs. A ray of sunlight falls into the pool as he looks down. Suddenly birds burst into song among the trees. The sun floods the grove and the fountain re-

doubles the vigour of its fall. The horn again cries deep among the trees. TONREHL stands motionless with closed eyes and trembling nostrils. YLANDE enters the pool and half sinking takes his hand. She draws back, but he lifts her and holds her close to him while the symphony of colour, sound, and perfume tumbles exultantly about them.

TONREHL. Ylande !

YLANDE. Tonrehl ! Beloved !

[They stumble to the bank through the sparkling light and fall upon the moss at the foot of an oak tree. Through the mist over the cliff thunder clouds of dazingly white form and cavernously black shade rise articulately, booming like distant breakers.]

TONREHL. Ylande ! Ylande ! Ylande ! Your name is like a sea roaring in my ears with a flood of passion—like a tender mingling of melodies gasping forth moonlight and pain.

YLANDE. I love you ! Oh, Tonrehl ! Death alone can come to us now.

TONREHL. Your head is like a lily balanced on a sturdy stock turning its petals to drink in the sun. Its edges are tinged with scarlet flammings, and at its heart there lies a crimson circle soft with dew. I love your lips, Ylande, I love your soul.

[They kiss each other.]

YLANDE. It was too late. I could not fly. I did not know.

TONREHL. The curse of life has descended on us both for your folly, and now death awaits us. Ylande! I have betrayed my trust; peace is destroyed, and the seventh art alone can give it to us.

[The clouds have now towered high into the sky, and the sunlight fades as the birds cease to sing. Thunder rolls through the grove, accompanied by restless breezes.]

YLANDE. I love you, Tonrehl. I am not afraid. I shall not be alone. I shall not weary, for I love you, and all that is could not equal my love for you. My folly was not mortal, it was vital, and by those in the valley our suffering will be justified.

[The grove becomes dark, and lightning heralds the approach of rain.]

TONREHL. Your hair melts about your temples and dies out in ordered curvelets upon the purity of your neck.

YLANDE. I love you!

TONREHL. Your neck is covered with a covering of pale star ruby and is melted into gliding life to display the heated coursing of your blood, which knows no end, but seems to beat from heart to surface, from surface to heart in over fulness.

YLANDE. I love you, Tonrehl! You are maddening in your beauty.

TONREHL. They warned me of you. I was pre-

pared, and in that stream of life passion has outraged peace to flatter death.

YLANDE. Then let us die.

TONREHL. Through our suffering shall be given the seventh art to the workers in the valley and in its essence they shall be made gods. This they told me, but I was afraid.

YLANDE. My wisdom was greater than yours. Yet what do we know? I only love you!

TONREHL. Ylande!

[A tremendous burst of thunder is accompanied by a nearer blowing of the horn and a downpour of rain. In a flash of lightning TONREHL and YLANDE are seen in each other's arms. In the next BOLOCLOTE, in black armour and on a black horse, is discerned between the trees. From the darkness following his horn pierces the ear brutally. A bolt of lightning falling into the pool gives rise to a prolonged flare, during which BOLOCLOTE beats back TONREHL, seizes YLANDE, and takes to flight with her before him on the saddle, while TONREHL pursues them into the darkness. The curtain falls during a final crash of thunder.]

END OF THE PRELUDE

ACT I

A DUNGEON in Boloclote's castle. In the centre a column supports the rough groining of a vault which, like the walls, is of gigantic and polygonal masonry. There is no decoration excepting two bands of ball flowers about a round-headed window in the rear wall. This window is barred and set high above the uneven slabs of the floor. On the right a flight of steps leads to a door of iron-fettered oak which closes an arch. The walls are hung with rings, chains and bars. Through an opening in the vault hang the weights of a clock, the ticking of which is faintly discernible. A heap of straw is piled on the left near a bowl of water. As the curtain rises the clock strikes midnight with strokes of two notes, one made by the clashing of cymbals, and the other, half a tone lower, by a bell. The stage is in utter darkness but for a glow through the opening in the vault from which are caught the echoes of a noisy feast. Suddenly a bar of moonlight falls from the window along the flags and dimly illuminates the dungeon. Ylande is seen at the top of the steps clinging to the door.

YLANDE. Tonrehl! Tonrehl! I am afraid. I do not want to suffer. I do not want to be alone.

[She weeps and tries to move the bolts of the door. Then she creeps down the steps and walks toward the pillar, from which she draws back in alarm.]

No! No! No!

[She goes to the pile of straw and falls sobbing on it. In a short time she sleeps. Later a cloud passes over the moon, revealing on its departure a figure like a shadow in the back of the dungeon which moves and comes toward YLANDE. It casts off a long dark cloak of sable and stands before her clothed in gay colours which are rich with emeralds. A sound of polyphonic music far away awakens YLANDE, who sits up and gazes at the visitor. She smiles and he holds out his hand to lift her.]

YLANDE. How did you come ? Who are you ?

SELADOR. I came from the shadows. I am Selador.

YLANDE. Then it is true I shall dream all the rest of my life.

SELADOR. Look at the moon lying in the bottom of your bowl, fenced about with sapphire orchids and spotted leaves. The stones are curiously grey, but the crystal is unblanched.

YLANDE. I had not seen it. Are you sure it is the moon ?

SELADOR. Yes, because every piece of water bears her scar. You know the sea once loved the moon and lifted up his lips to hers, until one night, as Venus hung in evil power upon her couch of saffron twilight, through the veil of violet night she gave her kiss and he fled to the arms of the pebbles on

the shore, which ever since have been called moon-stones. He shivered like a disc of polished mercury—and so all water shows the wound when the moon stands in tragic pallor high above, and all water tries to draw her to itself.

YLANDE. I had not seen all this because I am imprisoned.

SELADOR. I never heard that word. Sometimes I die, but liberty cannot be destroyed, for it is a creation of the soul.

YLANDE. Surely I have no liberty here. This is a dungeon.

SELADOR. Why this is not a dungeon! Men built it—see the honest effort it cost them to cut the stones and put them up. The vaults are clean limbed; so were their builders. The walls are solid; so were their makers. Those flowers about the window are fresh and living; such were those men, and in the evidence of their character you are surrounded by their personality. You could not be less alone.

YLANDE. But they do not speak.

SELADOR. You mean you cannot speak, but they are speaking to you with the best of their souls. You must speak in the same language to be understood. They did not build a dungeon, but an appeal to you to see and love them. Here is their knowledge in the structure; their strength in the masonry; their love in the decoration and their need in the very existence of

the place. Everything of them is here but their bodies.

YLANDE. I could not take them, but with the others even I should have to live their lives, not mine. That is not liberty.

SELADOR. There is colour in these stones ; form everywhere, and movement in the air. With these everyone's life is made and your own is to be found in them. Sensationalism is not life. That corner is as alive as a vast panorama, to a living mind. You have companionship and individuality ; why not liberty ?

YLANDE. I wish to change the settings and the circumstances daily. There is life.

SELADOR. That may be done within these walls. You may fly to the ends of existence or possess anything if you will without being less here. I tell you you have utter freedom.

YLANDE. Then why can I not see Tonrehl and feel his hand in mine ?

SELADOR. You could if it were not that you must know Ypême first. That is a conquerable task, not a breach of freedom.

YLANDE. I do not know where to look for him, nor how to leave this castle. Boloclote is strong.

SELADOR. Only because you are weak. Let me help you. What is that in the middle of the room ?

YLANDE. It is a column.

SELADOR. No ; it is a tree.

YLANDE. It is of stone !

SELADOR. Look at it and see. Look at the capital and you will see that it is not a column.

[YLANDE stares at the capital of the pillar, which slowly loses its form and turns into a branch of a peach-tree.

YLANDE. Why, it is made of flowers and bees are among them !

SELADOR. You see you were mistaken. Look now at the shaft and you will see that it is a trunk.

[YLANDE gazes at the shaft, which gradually loses its form and becomes the trunk and branches of a peach-tree.

YLANDE. Oh ! I should like to see a meadow full of them !

SCENE II

Suddenly the entire dungeon fades away and gives place to a meadow on the brink of a hill, which waves with clover and is dotted with sheep. On the right is a cave, beside which falls a brook. It is noon and the sun sways with the bees. Beyond stretches a valley closed in by seven mountains which stand each on its own base, not strung along on ridges, so that they seem very high. Deep down in the valley among canyons of rugged rock there flows a river which eats away the stones and sings weird songs. Its path is white with boulders except where green and yellow marbles from the hills have fallen into it and slopes of gravel show how the latter have been undermined.

Above the edge of the canyon billowy fields and rolling country wave in soft outline to the beginnings of the hills. Gorges, valleys, pinnacles and peaks break the surface of the landscape, which is carpeted with a lawn that one would say had been rolled for hundreds of years. It is not scarred by fences, but runs in one continuous stretch over the hills, down the valleys, up the peaks, and even on reaching the forest only changes colour to live beneath their shade. In spots it is broken by patches of gravel where the land has sunk, but its only other variation is in the nature of its vegetation. Wild crocuses dance beneath pine groves. There are cowslips in damp spots and violets of all colours, from gentlest lavender to deepest purple, from tiny white ones to huge pink ones, tumbling luxuriantly over the stony ledges. Strange indigo flowers of star-shaped beauty and clusters of pale anemone people the woods, while in the ravines curious stalks of milky opalescence hide themselves. Daffodils wave in sheltered dells, and a plant whose flowers are pink and blue peep out through the underbrush. A wealth of wild flowers lies here in extravagant masses and the shrubs are profused with multi-coloured berries. Tangles of lovely plants beckon to the flowers to come to the trees which grow over the lawn in discreetly spaced array, allowing the sunlight to trickle through. There are pines with twigs on which grow rings of needles a quarter of an inch in length; hemlock and spruce, ash and maple, as well as sturdy apple-trees, join forces with peach, cherry and plum to adorn the valley with gorgeous colour.

There is no jungle of sharp-pointed vines to clog the forest, so that one can walk everywhere in it without hindrance. Indeed, there are large clearings throughout in which swelling knolls and soft mosses tempt one to lie quietly to watch the branches stir against the clouds, while sudden

open spots exist in the very heart of the woods, where the trees look as if planted by a gardener's skill, so highly cultivated that they seem to grace a queen's garden. But there is no queen and no sound except for the clear notes of birds or the chatter of bright-eyed squirrels.

Beneath the darker areas of thick-roofed shade the ground dilates in emerald surfaces. Blinding openings shine at the ends of tunnels to show where the forest stops at the edge of precipices. Up the slopes the trees run, now hugging close, now stepping wide and now straggling into final efforts to surmount the crests.

Streams rage here ; small ones hissing over obdurate rocks ; big ones roaring down retreating valleys ; huge ones swirling amongst boulders—all running to join the river in the canyon, jumping over walls and falling in scattered drops or gurgling through tunnels of soft rock. They all begin in the snow among the crags or well from the ground as icy springs. The loveliest ones are those that water valleys of wheat ; where the fruit-trees vibrate with a hundred bees ; and the dying grass wafts incense into the air.

In the centre of the valley a steep hill rises which dominates it all. On one side it sheers into the canyon and vineyards cling to its face ; on the other a long saddle, holding in either slope a cup-shaped valley filled with cowslips and trees, joins it to the larger hills. At one end the mount subsides into rolling hills ; on the other, where the scene lies, it runs up to a steep precipice which drops into the valley at a place where a tributary meets the river. From this point the larger half of the valley is before one. For miles it extends to the mountains, which rise until the trees lose heart and leave the rocks bare in gigantic striations, where snow lodges among red crags. Descriptions are a reconstruction of the impressions

already in the mind, so that unless one has seen for oneself the scattered parts of this picture one cannot conceive of it.

YLANDE *looks about her, bewildered but joyful.*

YLANDE. Then I am free! Free! How beautiful it is!

SELADOR. With imagination one is always free. Even Boloclote cannot reach you here, and everything you want is at your call.

YLANDE. Then show me how I must find the seventh artist and by his means poor Tonrehl.

SELADOR. As I have released you from prison so I shall give you guides to further your quest. You will have three of these. They are called Greelfort, Morkan and Dorlas, and as they possess a great deal of power your path may be rendered easier. Years ago they were one and lived in this cave beside this brook of diamond spray surrounded by fruit-trees which bore heavy delicacies. This man was a shepherd and his flocks drifted freely like the clouds of April. But one day as he sat dipping his feet into the pool he gazed upon the water and discovered his spirit lying at the bottom among a silent sheet of autumn leaves. It was very small, like a black beetle, and so he was not surprised until a week later he returned to find a man sitting on the rough edging of the pool where he had sat, dipping his feet into the water as had he. The shepherd took his place on the opposite side and looking into the

pool noticed that the other man was exactly like himself, as they trembled in reflection on the water. Of course he was furious and rose to kill him, but the other told him it was too late; for years he had been denied, but now he could not be killed. He was the mind and the shepherd was the body. It was not until long after, when they had helped each other to live and loved each other, that the heart appeared. Being a third person, he made trouble. Before the other two were happy and strong. Now the mind became tyrannical and abused his power, which forced the shepherd to revolt. He was no weakling, so that there was no more peace in the cave, and poor Morkan, the heart, who had tried to steer them into a moral course, one night fled. In the morning the other two separated for ever.

YLANDE. And where are they now ?

SELADOR. Greelfort climbed to a crag and nearly froze to death. Morkan came back and lived alone in this cave, while Dorlas descended into the ravines. All three have never grown since.

YLANDE. Is there no way to bring them together again ?

SELADOR. By the very means you seek to find Tonrehl can they be reunited. The seventh art alone is capable of joining them, and so it is that I have decided to send you all off together to find it.

YLANDE. How can we meet them in this huge valley ?

SELADOR. Morkan ought to be here. If we call him he may be able to find the others.

[SELADOR takes a horn from his belt and blows it three times. A moment later a young man comes out from the cave clothed in a short tunic of silk. He is very beautiful, because his face shows both weakness and strength.]

SELADOR. Peace to you, Morkan !

MORKAN. And to you, Selador. Will you drink of my brook ?

SELADOR. Thank you. I have come to show your treasures to Ylande, who seeks Ypême.

MORKAN. I have no arts, yet I have many powers. Since my brothers left me, however, I have seldom shown them to anyone and they lie in the back of my cave unused.

YLANDE. May I not see them ?

MORKAN. Most easily. Sit in the grass and watch the clouds among the leaves while I find them.

[He goes into the cave and SELADOR sits down beneath a tree with YLANDE.]

YLANDE. What are all those mountains in the valley ?

SELADOR. I shall tell you that presently.

YLANDE. There is something strange on the top of the furthest one.

SELADOR. It is a crag that the sun strikes dumb.

YLANDE. I am sure it is something beautiful.

SELADOR. Everything on those mountains is beautiful.

[MORKAN returns carrying a chest in his arms.
He puts it down before SELADOR and undoes the locks.

MORKAN. Here is a case of common treasures that lay nearest to hand.

[He throws back the lid.

YLANDE. Oh! What lovely jewels!

SELADOR. They are very carefully worked.

YLANDE. They are gorgeous adornments. Tell me, what value have they?

MORKAN. Very little now. No one uses them any longer, but they are pretty things.

YLANDE. What is this?

[She designates an object in the case.

MORKAN (*drawing out a long chain of gold*). That is Obedience, Ylande. I used to wear it until people ceased to suffer it. Only nature is obedient to-day, for Greelfort has taught men to be conscious and not spontaneous.

YLANDE. May I wear it? It is so lovely.

MORKAN. By all means, yet do not mistake it for Slavery, and remember that the more powerful a thing is the more obedient it is to its own laws. Slavery is obedience to laws of others, which is immoral.

[YLANDE puts on the chain.

SELADOR. And what is that?

[He pulls out a crown of pearls.

MORKAN. That is Sacrifice, which means the

strengthening of self in order to give its fruits to others. When Sacrifice is self-deformation that frustrates the true gift it is bad. Wear it, Ylande, but do not forget this ; no injury to self is justifiable for it, even when the object is greater than the maker.

YLANDE. I ought not to take all your treasures.

MORKAN. They are valueless unless worn.

YLANDE. I am very grateful.

[SELADOR *puts the crown on her head.*

MORKAN. Here are Charity and Tolerance and Understanding. They are my greatest treasures.

[*He lays a goblet, a sword and a book on the grass.*

Here is Courage, here Respect, here Fidelity.

[*He holds up other objects before assembling them with the former.*

This is Pride—I wanted to show you Religion, but I lost it a few days ago in the valley. Hope, Trust, Gentleness—all the moral qualities are here.

SELADOR. Have you none but the good ?

MORKAN. Well, you see I hated the bad, so that I threw them away.

YLANDE. And what became of them ?

MORKAN. Oh, I am sure I don't know.

SELADOR. They were not destroyed ?

MORKAN. No, I think they were picked up by travellers.

YLANDE. And you kept all the good ones locked up ?

MORKAN. You see no one wants them. They took the bad—Malice, Envy, Selfishness—because they were easy to find; I had no room for them.

SELADOR. If you had had man would have been happier. Bad qualities are better locked up in the heart with good ones than left free in habits.

MORKAN. So ugly!

SELADOR. You should have hidden them and thrown these treasures into the valley for travellers to find.

MORKAN. A good heart rejects evil.

SELADOR. No, it does not. It collects it and treasures it. Bad hearts are miserly with good qualities.

MORKAN. Then am I bad?

SELADOR. Only sentimental. I think if you accompany Ylande you will make a valuable addition to your hoard. But first, Morkan, can you find your brothers for us? Perhaps they have what we seek.

MORKAN. If you blow your horn they will no doubt hear, but I do not care to see them. They have nothing of any value, let me tell you.

SELADOR. I wish to see them.

SCENE III

SELADOR *blows his horn three times. The meadow begins to transform itself into a rose garden. There are hedges of roses; they are massed*

in clumps overhead ; they are bent in arches over the paths and pour out from the ground like waves with hollows of deep red—striving passion, bodies of frail pink—pale with effort, and crests of white—attainment. Beyond this scene there is a beach of golden elders and syringas which catches the flecks of rose-leaf foam and is flanked by cliffs of purple beeches. These trees glow sombrely in contrast to streaming willows, flickering birches and the green of extending oaks. The rose-buds are tense with expectancy ; those half blown seem faded with restraint and the blossoms are languorous with fragrant death. DORLAS comes out from among them. He is a glorious animal, the culmination of physical beauty. Upon seeing MORKAN he frowns and turns towards SELADOR.

DORLAS. He here ? What have you called me for, Selador ?

SELADOR. I have brought Ylande to see your treasures. Do not be rude to Morkan.

DORLAS. He does not bother me.

MORKAN. It would give me no pleasure to.

SELADOR. We are looking for the seventh art. Let us see your jewels. Perhaps you can aid us.

DORLAS. I have no art and my jewels are those of all other men. There are my possessions ; roses, trees, perfumes, colour. I have limbs and health and youth ; strength is mine and spring is

my season. What has Morkan? Nothing but morals, while I have realities. There is blood in me and my senses revel in all experience. Morkan does not know how a horse runs. I do, for I see clearly and hear clearly.

MORKAN. You are a sensualist. I benefit from the lessons of my senses, while you merely enjoy them.

DORLAS. You haven't even an appetite to teach you. Every organ of me needs food and exercise; that is Life.

SELADOR. Do not dispute your contrasts. Let us see these things you have.

DORLAS. There is Nature. I cannot lend you my body to learn to know it. My passions are real and beautiful; my desires are vital and healthy. I have a storehouse for the impressions I receive from them which is inexhaustible. Greelfort is an empty storehouse except for the material I have given him, and Morkan is a hypocrite, who attributes qualities to things which are fixed identities. A sound is a sound, and it is morbid to let it be a symbol.

MORKAN. You see he has no idea of the effect of one thing on another.

YLANDE. I am sorry I took Tolerance away from you.

SELADOR. I do not think you have the seventh art, Dorlas.

DORLAS. What can I have but what I feel?

SELADOR. Ah ! Nothing, if you feel everything ; yet you lack certain senses.

DORLAS. Nonsense, I own them all. I made Morkan and Greelfort with my own hands. They can possess nothing I have not given them at least a germ of.

SELADOR. There is one sense which you have not. I don't know if you had it once or not.

DORLAS. Oh ! Why, I threw that away when my brothers made it horrible. They disfigured it so that it was no longer lovely.

SELADOR. Do you know where it is ?

DORLAS. No.

SELADOR. Then if you join Morkan and Ylande in their quest you may add something priceless to your senses. However, how can I find Greelfort ?

DORLAS. Blow your horn and he may hear ; but I do not want to see him.

MORKAN. Nor I.

SCENE IV

SELADOR *blows his horn and instantly the rose-trees begin to drop their petals in showers like tears. The pink flakes twist about in clouds as they fall and cling sadly to the limbs which transfix their depths. The leaves loosen also and hasten to nestle among the airy billows of incense already covering the ground. Behind*

the bare bushes the willows, elders and syringas are seen to shed their foliage also until there rests nothing but black boughs scrawled across a white sky over a sombre ground which lies dead in the waste. Snow commences to fall very quietly, which clings to every articulation of the trees and turns them into plumes of ivory and houses of coral. Scintillating frost gathers on the shrubs and busies itself with constructing crystals along the paths. Even the ground sparkles with powder, so that there is no colour in the scene except for the weariness of the sky and purple shadows between the banks of snow. GREELFORT, an old man, white as the snow, hobbles in and looks at YLANDE, with his arm behind his bent back.

YLANDE. Oh ! What have you done with all the roses ?

GREELFORT. Roses ? What do you care about roses ? Can you describe the phenomena of deliquescence and efflorescence and tell some of the uses made of each ?

YLANDE. I am afraid not.

GREELFORT. Tut ! tut ! Why is the equivalent weight of chlorine considered to be 35.45 and that of mercury 100 ?

SELADOR. We are not in search of knowledge, Greelfort, we are looking for the seventh art and what you might know of it.

GREELFORT (*seeing* DORLAS and MORKAN). I will not endure the presence of these two.

DORLAS. I wonder you are aware of MATTER.

SELADOR. They mean no harm.

GREELFORT. They have no nerves—all sensation and emotion.

SELADOR. Show us your treasures, Greelfort.

GREELFORT. Look at that sky. That is all you can see of my riches unless you study.

SELADOR. We have not the time to think.

GREELFORT. All I can show you is Knowledge. For me realism and matter and feeling are only tools by which I learn and by which I express myself. Memory, volition and reason are my servants. Science is my wealth, with all the powers it gives me.

SELADOR. Material powers.

GREELFORT (*starting*). Material!

SELADOR. Of course. Dorlas has similar power, but not so great, without thinking. So has Morkan. But you are not cerebral. You use the intellect to produce real power for you. A true spirit finds its life in mere thought, while you demand results. The processes by which you build up science are truly intellectual, but the results are not. The seventh art is the only really intellectual conception resting complete in itself; but the theory of chemistry would be absurd without matter.

GREELFORT. Hum! What do you think of criticism?

SELADOR. If you mean reason or the comparative

proportions of memorised impressions, it is intellectual ; if you mean destruction, it is material.

DORLAS. This will teach him his place, Morkan.

GREELFORT. The others haven't half the creative power that I have.

DORLAS (*to MORKAN*). There is spiritualism !

MORKAN (*to GREELFORT*). Granted, Greelfort, only we are not each of foreign composition.

SELADOR. You are each varied forms of energy and ought to be working together. Division of labour should not cause a struggle for supremacy. Come, be at least on speaking terms and help Ylande to find her art. She has no weapon and you have. The four of you may win, but lack one and it means failure. Have you no idea, Greelfort, of where the seventh art is ?

GREELFORT. There are seven mountains in this valley ; on each lives a man calling himself an artist. Perhaps among them may be what you seek.

YLANDE. What are artists ?

GREELFORT. They are men who came from nothing. They own the valley and are very rich and happy. They live in solitude and have spent their time in realising their spirits. They each chose a different form of expression, but they all say the same thing although they wouldn't admit it.

SELADOR. Then I shall leave you here to pursue your quest together, but if you are in need of Imagination, call me, and I will come. When you have succeeded, Ylande, you will find Tonrehl.

YLANDE. Shall I then cease to dream, and die ?

SELADOR. If you know the meaning of death.

[He kisses her on the forehead and starts to go away.]

YLANDE. Can you not go with us ?

SELADOR. You do not need me, but remember this : through Passion only is to be found Love.

[He disappears.]

GREELFORT. Such a conceited person ! You will never find the seventh art with these others, Ylande. The only life is in the head ; better come with me.

YLANDE. No, no, no ; let us all stay together.

MORKAN (*to GREELFORT*). You always think. If you trusted more to your feelings and character you would be wiser. Dear Ylande !

GREELFORT (*mockingly*). Dear Ylande !

MORKAN. When you have lived longer you will learn what sympathy is. The proof of the irreality of thought is in that it never suffers. Come, Ylande !

YLANDE. I prefer to walk with Dorlas. He is more beautiful and does not quarrel.

[She runs to DORLAS, who puts his arm about her.]

DORLAS. Leave her alone and follow me.

[He walks off with YLANDE, followed by GREELFORT and MORKAN. Before they leave the stage the clock which struck on the raising of the curtain sounds one o'clock. The entire stage grows slowly dark. GREELFORT, MORKAN, DORLAS and

YLANDE stand as if petrified. At length it is quite dark and nothing can be seen but the glow through the opening in the vault where the clock weights hang. The sounds of feasting above are still audible. A bar of moonlight falls from the window in the back of the dungeon and reveals YLANDE asleep on her pile of straw. The curtain falls slowly.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

A VAULTED cavern by the sea. From large openings in the rear, where the water has eaten the stone away, is visible the expanse of a beach and the ocean. The grotto is sombre. Scrubby trees, black against the brilliant sand, hang about the entrance and the waves resound regularly along the shore. Outside it is hot and the light is vibrating. The air is filled with a dust and haze which refracts the rays of sunlight into mysterious depths of distant colour, although beyond, a glare of islands breaks the veil of mist with startling contrasted white. The sea sways in gentle rhythm, now breaking into foam, now leaping high over hidden rocks, or turning into tints of ivory and emerald above the purity of long bars of sand which stretch forth in slow depression. Ever clearer, ever greener it grows until at the edge of the beach it gasps forth its life in vain attempts to dominate its enemy and falls back scattering foam upon the hardened floor of sand.

The beach, shelving into the sea on the one hand, runs easily upward on the other, to terminate in low banks of dark blue-green verdure which rises and falls beyond over a rolling landscape unbroken by tree or fence but accented with occasional walls of plaster. The sands run crookedly away between the sea and land until terminated by a mass of pumice rock resembling a sponge, in which abide a multitude of crabs that scuttle into darkness upon the approach of danger. Ribbed as if carved by hand and hard as Egyptian marble, the beach presents a surface which resists the waves

and wind, but breaks into soft depths near land where the water seldom rises to cover it with green.

In spite of this firmness of texture there are other marks upon the sand than wave impressions, which trace out curves that twist and intermingle like the meshes of a net, now stopping short and then winding far away along the shore; sometimes mere dots, at others deep impressions. They are footprints, and the beach is Ariadne's hall. Here at their last succession appears a dancer who leaps in a single curve from behind the rocks and balances with outstretched arms before the sea, his feet in the line of fusion and his head thrown back. Presently a girl steals out from the shadows and throws a pebble at him. He turns and they pursue each other about the cave until he seizes her flowing hair, which resembles the curves of seaweed swayed by hidden currents, and imprisons her within a wall of sand. So captured she pays for her audacity by watching him playing with the sea. He courts it, caresses it, flatters it and pursues it as any faun would offer love to nymph, and she in jealousy weeps for pain. Now he is rebuffed, now encouraged, until growing hardier he plunges into the water and so wins success in the possession of his love. The girl faints within her circular prison, and the man, rising sparkling with the kisses of his mistress, perceives her curved like a dying plant. He bounds to her playfully and halts before her with a gesture of seduction. She lifts her head, and realising her release, smiles joyfully. He offers her his hand, which she accepts, and both forgiving they disappear like clouds before a capricious wind, drunk with the joy of life. Nature seems empty after their departure. The haze, the island and the colour of the sands no longer are of beauty. The sea rises greedily to absorb their footprints and the breeze sighs dismally through the stiffened sedge.

So GREELFORT, MORKAN, DORLAS *and* YLANDE *find*
the cavern when they enter it

GREELFORT. What a mortifying place.

YLANDE. One no longer sees the mountains. Is it here that we must search ?

MORKAN. How stupid to have said the seventh art. How do we know which is the seventh ? I have only heard of six. Here is Dancing ; why is it not the seventh ?

DORLAS. I think it is the first. What colour, form and movement ! It expresses passion and energy better than do the others.

MORKAN. But its merit lies in illustration of the community of our souls. If it were not for such demonstration we might believe ourselves quite alone in character or enigmas to all the world. Beauty is the frequency of a moral quality.

GREELFORT. You both err in your interpretation. Dancing displays the development of the intellect in its power of government or in its direction over ideas. One does not dance merely to become intoxicated with excitement or to show how ordinary one is. It is an expression of religion, and science is in its every motion.

YLANDE. How can it be great then if its identity is concealed to each of you behind an interpretation ?

GREELFORT. You are ignorant of the meaning of

art, Ylande. Nature creates identities. Art creates thought.

DORLAS. Don't listen to him. It has nothing to do with thought. It is a spontaneous function like eating or drinking, and is as necessary in order to employ the energy from the latter as hunting is to supply their material.

MORKAN. Nonsense! Art is simply to help others to live and to make us strong by giving ourselves.

GREELFORT. There is an heroic motive! You strengthen the existent or traditional form with no idea of developing it. You will never grow that way. Art is to develop the spirit by exercising it.

YLANDE (*turning from them*). I don't see how you can enjoy anything if you analyse it so. I am pleased or displeased by things.

GREELFORT. You rely on your tastes. You cannot use them as a standard.

MORKAN. Why should she want one?

DORLAS. It is from that sort of reception of events that true effects result. It is impossible for art to aid a spirit like yours, Greelfort.

GREELFORT. I should hope not. Conscious self-formation is greater than a haphazard indigestion of impressions.

YLANDE. I wish I were all alone where I could live without your opinions. I don't think evolution will vary an instant from its path for all your suggestions. It is like a man without children. He always has systems for bringing up those of others.

If you were factors in life you would work and not look on. Spectators are always parasites.

[JANOÖN *appears*.

GREELFORT. Intelligence understands art. I wish merely to make it intelligible and so of value.

DORLAS. We have enough shores in geography. They are only narrow lines lying about every continent.

[JANOÖN *comes into the cave*.

YLANDE (*running up to him*). Surely it is you who have the seventh art!

JANOÖN. Hallo! Can you dance?

YLANDE. No, I am looking for the seventh art.

JANOÖN. Pooh! I never heard of but one, and if there are others mine is the first, not the seventh.

YLANDE. Yet it is here in this valley.

GREELFORT. You see we might have started with another and come to yours second or third. Then it would not be the first.

JANOÖN. True. Well, my art is Dancing, if you care to call it the seventh that way.

YLANDE. What is it?

JANOÖN (*looking at her in surprise*). Why, superficially it is motion, which is the seed of all life, but as life now is differentiated from crude vibration so dancing is transformed from motion into art. The sense of motion is greatest in man, and so the art which enters by that sense has the greatest opportunities. That is one reason why my art is the first; another is that I have the highest ideas to put into that form. There is no end to them.

Everything that I learn from my senses and feel with my emotions and think with my head is given some realisation and I am complete. Within me is utter fullness. I am the perfect man. Even if I showed you all my dances they would be but a handful among those that I am conceiving. I know everything and yet I care nothing about knowledge. I am the future. I am an individual, and in my isolation I am unselfish. Destroy the world and all in it and I will be a perfect duplicate. Nothing can be lost while I live. My art reproduces infinity. I work to please myself because it alone gives me joy, and in joy is life. I am a socialist. Power is within me and not in things nor in symbolisms of things. I am comprehensive and no other force can dominate me.

GREELFORT. How can you progress unless you can conform to the wisdom of others ?

JANOÖN. The only way to progress is to ignore the wisdom of others. Here is the treasure of all the principles of work : cast off all authority, rebel if necessary, and be governed by your own laws only. It would be silly for a thistle to try to fall as rapidly as a boulder simply because it lived on a rocky slope. Be an individual regardless of the claims of others which are made hideous by duty. He who is not utterly free and utterly eccentric is not an artist. This principle of socialism is perhaps the seventh art ; it is the best I can show you. It is Nature.

YLANDE (*to GREELFORT*). How shall we know?

MORKAN. It is not the seventh art. My dear Janoön, you don't pay enough attention to technique. You soar away on how things might be done instead of doing them. Putting together, lines, shade—there is art.

JANOÖN. Technique is only the completion of expression. It is not polish and it will be concomitant with sincerity. If it chokes the motive force it is immoral. You should look for the ultimate spirit, not at construction.

MORKAN. I think that form is more essential than thought.

GREELFORT. Naturally you do. That is sentimentalism—which keeps the classics alive.

MORKAN. Certainly energy in the form of a bird is more beautiful than energy in the form of a stick, although it may be the same energy. That is the value of form.

GREELFORT. Only because the bird is finer energy than the stick.

JANOÖN (*to YLANDE*). Very amusing! Why do you go about with such stupid people?

YLANDE. Oh dear! Why do they talk so much? No one wants to think as others do or to have things proved. I want the seventh art, but I do not know where it is.

JANOÖN (*putting his arm about YLANDE*). You are not looking for art, Ylande. I cannot give you what you seek, for attraction is ungovernable. You

pursue something more than art. Above lies the valley of the seven mountains. Go and search there if you will, but be brave, for you will suffer pain, and in pain there is no evolution. Perhaps I shall join you later.

YLANDE. I have so little strength.

JANOÖN. Dorlas ! Morkan ! What are you here for ? You are sent to aid Ylande and be her strength.

[DORLAS and MORKAN take YLANDE's hands.
GREELFORT follows them.]

SCENE II

They all go out from the cavern and disappear. It grows darker and then the scenery begins to change. It moves diagonally downward across the stage and from the broken crevices of the grotto rises through the wooded slopes of a ravine to the smooth walls of a cliff in which there is a small door. On the stone are painted gigantic figures in extraordinary colours, which have no intelligible form. Beyond, a glimpse is had of the valley of the Seven Mountains. YLANDE appears with GREELFORT, MORKAN and DORLAS.

DORLAS. Ho ! La ! ho ! oh !

GREELFORT. There is no question about the whereabouts of this man. He follows no law but his own.

MORKAN. It is too bad he should be a riddle to his brothers.

GREELFORT. Strength is a riddle to the weak. If you suddenly saw the universe as it will be in ten thousand years, you would not believe it.

[KISNEL comes in with a bundle of brushes in his hand.]

KISNEL (*aside*). More people to watch me work! (*To MORKAN.*) Pardon me! I suppose you are lost. The road is over there.

[*He points into the wood.*]

GREELFORT. Lost? You flatter yourself. We came to see you.

KISNEL. I never paint still life.

YLANDE. I am looking for the seventh art, if you can show me.

KISNEL. Seventh! No, I do not know. Here is my art. I paint. Is that what you want?

YLANDE. I do not know.

KISNEL. My work is not directed; it is created by inner forces and I am inevitable. I am a participator, and in the motion of my life leave living fragments of myself. I do not know whether my work is useful or useless. I seek I know not what, but I work because I must be happy.

YLANDE. Why is it, then, that you have not what I seek?

KISNEL. Because one must already have what one seeks. You have none of my art in you.

YLANDE. I have life.

KISNEL. You have very little or you would find instantly whatever you wanted. Here, I will give you one principle of art to help you. The form of a realised idea of sublime quality must fashion itself. In other words, it must be an improvisation, not a design, and its composition must be built up without a sketch or model. It must therefore not only be quite new, but must contain not one feature of assimilative, imitative or representative extraction. Its form must be an enigma of the future until the people are dominated and formed by it. When its function of adding to the subject-matter of thought is over, it will become a useless organ and will no longer be artistic. Hence past art is only historically artistic, and to allow the critic to class it in any way with modern art is immoral. It constitutes museum pieces and we do not work for museums.

GREELFORT. But these things ?

[He points to the wall.]

KISNEL. I have arranged colour abstractly to realise and not symbolise myself. A word is a symbol of a sentiment which is already understood. Art should be the realisation of a sentiment that has not been understood, not a symbol, so that all may know it. One must already have the thought behind the symbol in one's head or the symbol would be senseless. And so symbolic art only records. New symbols for new thoughts are only

to be guessed at. The realisation of the thought is a fact.

GREELFORT. But can a thought be put into real form ?

KISNEL. Yes. Realism is more powerful than symbolism, as long as the realistic identity is of an idea and not of a thing. Ideas can be put into a real form.

MORKAN. Why raise barriers between men ? Such forms will never be understood.

KISNEL. If Socialism distributed money would you restrict it to copper pieces because the poor had never seen gold ? Golden ideas need greater distribution than copper ones and men will be able to read better for having to study. It is a mistake to give structure and symmetry to a thing which is not intense with meaning. Nature makes her forms ; we make ours in her sense formless in order to live intellectually. In speaking there is no natural form. There should be none in art, which is only a deeper speech. Natural forms and natural models are immoral in art.

DORLAS. To me these paintings are intelligible. They are an addition to nature.

MORKAN. They are meaningless to me.

YLANDE. But is this all ?

KISNEL. Oh no, this is only my work in hand.

YLANDE. Have you any more ?

KISNEL. Infinitely, of the past. Mosaics, tapestries, oil, water-colours—I have painted on everything with anything.

YLANDE. Are you quite sure that the seventh art is not among them ?

KISNEL. I do not know what you are talking about. I have old schools of pattern painting which the critics have formed, but my art is the first of the arts if there are any others.

YLANDE. May I look inside that door to see if it is not there ?

[She approaches the little door in the cliff.]

KISNEL. Good heavens, no !

YLANDE. I am sure that I will find something there. Is it yours ?

KISNEL. No; but it is forbidden to open the door. I never have. Something horribly dangerous is in there. It will kill you if you open the door.

YLANDE. You said that one must have what one seeks in order to find it. I love, and to find Tonrehl I have only to show my love. I am not afraid. I have come into the valley to show my love and to prove it. There is no place that I must leave uninvestigated.

KISNEL. But we shall all be killed if you open the door. Greelfort, Dorlas, do not let her.

MORKAN. Be wise, Ylande. The quest is hard enough without incurring fresh dangers.

YLANDE. I am not afraid to die. Perhaps then I

shall find Tonrehl. We have done nothing but argue and quarrel ever since we started. I shall open the door.

DORLAS. I won't let you.

[He stands before the door.]

YLANDE. Are you to be my enemy then?

DORLAS. But, Ylande, it is folly.

YLANDE. I wish to open the door.

DORLAS. No!

[YLANDE looks at him scornfully and he slinks away from the door. YLANDE goes up to it. The others huddle together at the other side of the stage shuddering with terror. YLANDE puts her hand on the lock and opens the door calmly. It is quite dark inside. Nothing comes out, nor is there any noise.]

YLANDE *(looking around)*. There is nothing. I am going in.

MORKAN. Ylande!

[She is about to enter, when she draws back hastily. A crowd of bats and owls flap forth and drive her from the door. Then an enormous spider creeps out and stands horridly in the opening.]

DORLAS *(moaning)*. Ylande! Ylande! It is death and separation. It is called Death and Separation. Fly!

[He takes to his heels, followed by KISNEL and his brothers. YLANDE stands waiting for]

the spider to move. Finally it crawls further out and begins reeling off a web which it attaches to the walls and trees at a considerable height from the ground. YLANDE crouches at one side of the stage without moving and the spider does not appear to notice her. When he has quite finished his web he sits in the middle of it. At the same time another one makes its appearance, which is called Sleep and Illness. It waits in the doorway. As the spider and YLANDE remain motionless, two lovers stroll in, locked in each other's arms. It has grown darker and the hour seems very pleasant. They move forward lost in joy and stop beneath the web to kiss each other. Instantly the spider drops down, seizes the woman and carries her off to his web. While the man is in a passion of frenzy the other spider darts out from the door and seizing him retreats to the cave. YLANDE stands up horrified and as she sways in indecision another couple make their appearance. These are a mother and her son, who walk hand in hand in silence. As with the lovers, when they come beneath the web, the spider drops down, takes the little boy and leaves the mother distracted. Again the second spider darts forth to claim its prey.

YLANDE *cries out and rushes to protect the woman, but it is too late, and she falls by the doorway terror-stricken. Then a third couple enter, who are two friends. They wander beneath the web arm in arm, deep in happiness. The spider is about to fall upon them too, but YLANDE rushes at it with the bundle of brushes which KISNEL dropped in his flight and strikes it with them. Instantly the spider and its web burst into flame and with much smoke rise out of sight. The second spider, which now flies out, is also struck and experiences the same fate. In the meantime the two friends have been standing at one side. When YLANDE turns to look for them, they come forward, and one of them is seen to be SELADOR. The other is hidden by a hood and is not recognisable. YLANDE is trembling with fatigue when SELADOR takes her arm.*

YLANDE. Oh !

SELADOR. Brave child ! Those awful things were only Boloclote, however, phantoms, a disease of the imagination, and they could not have hurt you, for you were not afraid. Death and separation, illness and sleep, are only dangerous to those who fear them, and they cannot be potent enemies to love. And now Ylande, as you have shown your love in

facing danger, although you have not found the seventh art, let this vision be your reward.

[He gives YLANDE the hand of the other man and goes away. The hood slips back from the stranger's head, who is seen to be TONREHL—but not the real TONREHL, only a vision. He bends his head and kisses YLANDE, who sinks on his shoulder. Then he takes her and lays her down on a bank of grass, where he leaves her asleep as he goes away. It grows lighter. After a little while GREELFORT's head is seen peering around the trunk of a tree. He steals in on tiptoe, followed by MORKAN and DORLAS. They look about fearfully, but seeing nothing amiss go near to YLANDE.]

MORKAN. Is she—dead ?

DORLAS. No, I think not.

MORKAN. Is she—hurt ?

GREELFORT. I believe not.

[They touch YLANDE. She sits up sleepily.]

YLANDE. Tonrehl ! *(She sees the others.)* Where is he ? What have you done with him ?

[She starts up.]

DORLAS. Who ?

YLANDE. Oh it was too true. I have not found the seventh art.

[She weeps.]

MORKAN. Where have they gone ?

YLANDE. What ?

MORKAN. Those hideous things !

YLANDE. Oh, gone. I killed them.

DORLAS. You ? [He laughs.

YLANDE. Let us go. Where is the way ?

GREELFORT. I think this will teach you not to open doors again. If someone had not come you would have been more than unconscious.

[YLANDE goes to the cliff and leans against it with her hand. It begins to open, one half disappearing at one side, the other at the other.

SCENE III

The retreating walls reveal the intricate construction of a steel framework for a high building. Its tiers soar out of sight above and long perspectives are had down its aisles, at the terminations of which appears the valley. On the walls and floor the beginnings of completion are evidenced by stone and marble. YLANDE stands gazing at the chains and machinery while GREELFORT, MORKAN and DORLAS examine the decorative work.

GREELFORT. What is this ?

DORLAS. I suppose it is more art.

MORKAN. Where are the workmen of this place ?

[ANLYPH comes in.

ANLYPH. What do you want ?

DORLAS. I hardly know.

YLANDE. I am sure it is not far now. Where is the seventh art if not here ? Do you know Ypême ?

ANLYPH. Ypême ? I do not know him. This is my art.

GREELFORT. Why this is not art. It is too practical, it serves existing conditions and everyone wants them changed. He will know nothing of Ypême.

ANLYPH. All art is unpractical, even in serving existing conditions, for it destroys older forms. The mind may be futuristic, but it would kill the body to make it so. Architecture is the body of art, and just as our bodies are practical so must it be. Its heart and head—decoration and contents—may be as ideal as you wish.

DORLAS. At least the skeleton is gaunt and clean, compact and hard as it should be. It only needs flesh and features.

ANLYPH. In it is realised the essential power of the mind, that power which in growth will give man infinity. But the power to do is not the power to BE, and however much man may control energy, his real godliness is in BEING. Science is done ; art is. But although I use the fullness of power I combine with it deity. Here is my engineering ; there begins my individuality in those carvings and paintings.

GREELFORT. What do you maintain art to be ?

ANLYPH. The realisation of the sublime, not the practical element of man's spirit. Anyone can dis-

cover and use natural laws; only an artist can realise the true soul, which is a thing above knowledge or even thought. What is evolution but a system? Individuality is divine and perplexing. It is the only mystery.

GREELFORT. But can individuality of thought be realised?

ANLYPH. In art only and in an unintelligible art, for individuality is unintelligible. It is a poor artist whom contemporaries understand.

YLANDE. Where are the cathedrals and castles and farms?

ANLYPH. They are the improvisations of my youth which are no longer useful.

MORKAN. You make a mistake in ignoring tradition. You destroy memory.

ANLYPH. To use traditions paralyses them.

YLANDE. You use so many arts—can you know nothing of the seventh?

ANLYPH. I never bothered about it, although I have heard of it.

YLANDE. Which way must we go?

ANLYPH. Oh a long way. There is a barren mountain at the end of the valley, where they say a man lives, but you will find nothing there in the way of art. *[Notes of distant music are heard.]*

YLANDE. What is that?

ANLYPH. The wind.

DORLAS. I heard something else.

[The music is more distinct.]

ANLYPH. Oh! that is a fellow who makes noises like that to amuse himself.

MORKAN (to GREELFORT). These people are fearfully rude.

GREELFORT. That is because they are powerful.

SCENE IV

The music approaches nearer. Suddenly the stage grows utterly dark and after a pause the music bursts out close at hand. "Overture pour un comédie," opus 2, by László Lajtha, is the subject, and it is played through in darkness. As it ends, the clock of BOLOCLOTE's castle strikes two.

SCENE V

The glow in the vault of the dungeon where the weights hang down is visible. The moonlight creeps into the cell and YLANDE is seen lying asleep upon her pile of straw. The curtain sinks.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

ON the edge of a wide and very terrible crevice. Along the front of the stage is a narrow ledge of rock, beyond which lies a bottomless fissure whose further wall is supposedly at a distance of some fifty feet. On the other side is a bare plateau, while far away can be seen the peaks of the Seven Mountains. A narrow bridge spans the chasm, at the end of which brood four awful monsters in the forms of serpents. Ylande, Greelfort, Morkan and Dorlas make their way over the ledge. They come to the bridge and hesitate.

DORLAS (*shivering*). Can it be here? I think we are getting further away at every step.

MORKAN. What a ghastly bridge. I shall not go over it. [GREELFORT *utters a terrified squeak*.

YLANDE. What is the matter?

GREELFORT (*pointing over the crevice*). See! Look! Oh! What horrible creatures over there! Decidedly we go back.

[MORKAN and DORLAS *see the dragons and cling to each other with shaking knees*.

MORKAN. Don't disturb them. Shh! We can creep away silently.

DORLAS. Come!

YLANDE. No ; if we go back there is no other road to take. We must cross.

GREELFORT. But we will be eaten up.

DORLAS. There is no chance of winning against four such dragons. Be sensible, Ylande. At least we do not wish to die.

YLANDE. I am going to awaken them.

GREELFORT. }

MORKAN. } No !!!

DORLAS. }

GREELFORT. It is no use, Ylande. I know what they are. They are Sex, Age, Caste and Race, and are sworn enemies to the seventh art. Sex alone half destroys the seventh art, and the others make away with the rest. That is why it is so hard to find.

YLANDE. But surely they can be killed. I am not going to let them stand in the way of my finding Ypême. They are absolutely of no importance. What nonsense ! I mean to find the seventh art in spite of a thousand monsters. These miserable ones, if they are enemies to Ypême, must die. At any rate they shall be no factors against my reaching the seventh mountain.

MORKAN. Oh Ylande—it is best—

YLANDE. These serpents can have no strength. I am not afraid of them.

[She picks up a stone and throws it across at the dragons. GREELFORT, MORKAN and DORLAS retreat, but YLANDE stands firm.]

She throws another stone and the monsters awaken. They begin breathing out steam and fire as they rise, and seeing YLANDE, utter roars of fearful loudness. Then they tumble furiously to the bridge and rush out upon it to exterminate her. She stands calmly before them. As they are crossing the bridge it suddenly collapses and casts them into the abyss. Roars and rumblings are heard as they fall. At the same time a rainbow springs up from the depths and spreads its arc from one precipice to the other to form a new bridge. YLANDE gives her hand to DORLAS and they all walk out across the crevice to the other side upon it.

As they disappear clouds of smoke begin to rise out of the crevice, which obscure the rainbow and completely hide the background.

SCENE II

When the smoke clears away the scene has changed to a flat piece of ground at the foot of the seventh mountain which rises beyond, the crags of which are visible high in the heavens, packed with snow. This meadow belongs to BORTH, who is found working on a curiously formed block of marble. GREELFORT and DORLAS come in.

DORLAS. Unless the mere mechanics of the body are sufficiently exercised, they die. Their working is a thing apart from thought or even feeling. Let them then be fully fed as functions without reference to results. There can be none.

GREELFORT. It is all very well to cultivate the body as every use of it does, but, dear fellow, in alienating it from the mind it grows too strong and murders not only thought but sentiment. I do not maintain that sensuality is crime, but the edification of the senses cramps their brothers. If I did not care to think I should revel in sensation.

[MORKAN *enters*.

MORKAN. But only through the body can expression come from the heart. All creations of the head are justifications of love and not expressions. (*Turning to BORTH*) Hallo! What is this?

BORTH (*stopping his work*). This is Nascence.

[*He resumes his work*.

GREELFORT. He is like all the others. What does he say? This stone has no assimilative guide to hint at meaning.

MORKAN. He calls it Nascence. I think he is mad.

DORLAS. I am tired of these efforts to do something worth while. Where is Ylande?

MORKAN. But is this all that the sculptor has to show us?

BORTH (*turning from his work*). Phidias was powerful in a misdirected way. We do not want

bad photographs ; we need new languages, or at least to use old ones in a better way. Art must not represent even the human form.

DORLAS. Yet I prefer statues of lovely men to your lump there.

BORTH. This is what lies in my brain about the birth of worlds and the awakening of energy. No borrowed limb could assume or suggest my meaning.

MORKAN. I doubt whether thought can be given a real form. If mediums of transmission were unnecessary it would pass like electricity from one intellect to another.

BORTH (*in surprise*). You are going too far ahead. Until thought rises above its barriers it must take a real form, not a substitutional one. My art is the first so far as art has proceeded.

MORKAN. How sad, for we need the seventh. Do you know of it ?

BORTH. There are not seven ; there can be but one.

DORLAS. But we have seen several before yours. We just left Music behind us.

BORTH. Oh yes—Music—it is an offshoot of sculpture.

MORKAN. I find it accomplishes your ideas much better than sculpture.

BORTH. For the ears only ; sculpture goes through the eye for all the senses. (*AMNAE enters.*) More of them ! Love has no opportunity to sacrifice.

[*He backs away at his marble.*]

AMNAE. What is all this ?

GREELFORT. Art.

AMNAE. Nonsense, my dear fellow, there is no such thing ! They used to call Literature art, but, thank Heaven, people now realise that it needs a special label. How can pigments and stone and pulleys make art ?

GREELFORT. I suppose anything that approaches the mind through a sense is as good as another.

AMNAE. Not at all. Spoken words spontaneously directed by thought are the purest form of art.

MORKAN. Is Literature the seventh art ?

AMNAE. I have just said it was above art. It must not describe things. If it studies at all it must study the motive forces and not the results. Novels are not literature, nor is any story. Action is the death of poesy and true literature flows in the form of an impromptu without preconceived shape. If you address the critic he will tell you what the classics are if you care to make poor imitations of them, but the real art is unstudied. It is made by amateurs, not professionals.

MORKAN. Where do the great masters stand ?

AMNAE. Eras ahead of their parasites and eras behind their children. Modern classicists are of the former ; modern revolutionists of the latter.

MORKAN. What heathens these men are ! All that life is made of they blaspheme.

AMNAE. And all that life will be made of they create.

[YLANDE enters, followed by JANOÖN, KISNEL, ANLYPH and MELENAIS. She runs up to DORLAS and kisses him.

YLANDE. These others heard the music of Melenaïs and came to him. We have gone back through all their countries still seeking, but we have not found. What is here ?

DORLAS. Two more of them, but nothing convincing.

YLANDE (*looking about*). But there are six here. Surely if we find one more he must be the seventh.

DORLAS. I think there are no more.

JANOÖN. Oh no. At least, there is another mountain, but it is bare. No mighty walls lift their masses ; no towers fling graceful forms into the winds ; no statues glint in the sunlight, and not a single painting is discoverable in all its width.

ANLYPH. He does not sing or write, and his feet refuse to dance. He is no artist.

YLANDE. But he must see and feel all that you do.

JANOÖN. He cannot tell of it if he does. He is quite worthless. Since we have visited each other, we six, how mean he is.

KISNEL. I once thought that it was bliss to sing to myself alone, but now that I see how beautiful you all are I never want to live alone. It is strange, but I feel that we all say the same thing in a different way.

ANLYPH. I understand perfectly what you others mean in your work. I thought before that you were not serious, but now I see that you are like me and simply work differently. The same laws, the same means are used by each to transmit the same ideas, and I think we ought all to live together.

MELENAIS. Yes, let us all live and work together. We understand each other and all our arts are one. We ought not to be divided for silly matters of medium. There is but one art.

JANOÖN.	} Only one.
KISNEL.	
ANLYPH.	

AMNAE. There are many variations in our expression. Do they mean no difference in idea?

JANOÖN. Not one. Art is religion, and all differences in men's religions are but words.

BORTH. I think this is true. (*To AMNAE*) We have not visited our brothers, but I feel too that we are of one spirit. Come, let us never separate, but live together. It will be lonely now if we do not.

AMNAE. I am of that opinion. Here is my hand and my heart, dear brothers.

MELENAIS. What joy! Life has been trivial until now. I shall work a thousand times better.

JANOÖN. My friends!

[*The six artists all embrace each other with exclamations of tender affection, while MORKAN draws aside to shed a tear of*

emotion. There is a moment of silent feeling relieved by clasped hands.

BORTH (*suddenly*). And the other ?

JANOÖN. Oh, he has nothing to show us. He is inferior in intellect, emotionless and weak. He cannot live with us.

[*They all laugh. MELENAIS bursts into a joyful little song, JANOÖN cuts a caper, and all seem very happy.*]

GREELFORT (*to YLANDE*). What happy fools they are !

MORKAN (*overhearing*). I think it is the loveliest thing I ever saw—such confidence and trust. We have done well.

JANOÖN. And now, dear brothers, we must decide which hill to live upon. If we live together it must be on one mountain, and I think that mine is best suited to us all. You see——

KISNEL. Why yours ? Mine is more convenient.

JANOÖN (*indignantly*). Well, of course——

ANLYPH. Don't let us disagree on this matter. My hill is devoted to all your arts and is decidedly the best.

JANOÖN. I think not. Dancing is, after all, the most perfect art—and——

KISNEL. By no means. Painting is more expressive and more real. Dancing only tells of the moment.

BORTH. You will all disagree unless you live with me. See—Sculpture is irreproachable for

power ! It is real ; painting is only an imitation and dancing conveys no thought.

MELENAIS (*drawing aside*). I don't care to discuss this ; I will not live with people who fight over so small a matter. I want to sing, that is all, and I won't give it up for anyone.

AMNAE (*scornfully*). If you thought, as I do, instead of singing and dancing, you would accomplish more. You are only plates for the world to strike upon.

ANLYPH. Oh, be reasonable. See, on my hill are all your arts. I have cities where reality and symbolism grow together. My palaces will house your bodies as well as your souls, and you will not have to be cramped at all.

JANOÖN. Yes, only you would lord it over us all the time. Anyway, your use of our arts is a crude one and we should have to sacrifice our individuality.

ANLYPH. Be calm ! Be calm ! You may have my whole hill and make it over if you wish ; you see, I really love you.

BORTH. He has begun to patronise us already. Look here—this is my mountain you are on, and unless you can behave yourselves you all get off it. If you wish you may stay, and we can all live here together, but I will not move. I can offer no more.

KISNEL. It is quite enough. You needn't insult me by your paltry offers.

YLANDE. Oh, do not speak so cruelly !

KISNEL. Hold your tongue, little girl; this is man's work.

GREELFORT. But, my dear friends——

BORTH (*furiously*). Don't be sarcastic!

MORKAN (*bursting into tears*). Ah me! And they were all so sweet!

KISNEL. I am going.

DORLAS. Not so easily, my dear. You insulted Ylande and you shall apologize for it.

KISNEL. To whom pray?

DORLAS. To me.

KISNEL. Never!

DORLAS. We shall see.

[*He pitches into KISNEL, who retaliates in like measure.*]

YLANDE. No, no! stop them, Morkan.

MORKAN. Dorlas! Desist!

[*He tries to separate them and is knocked flat by a blow from DORLAS.*]

GREELFORT. Tut, tut! This is child's-play!

DORLAS (*turning to GREELFORT*). You be quiet!

BORTH. Well, I shall not see one of us abused by a barbarian. Come, kick him out!

ANLYPH. He can well take it after the things he said to me.

BORTH. Oh, you too?

[*He strikes ANLYPH, who returns the blow. They clinch. DORLAS begins to lay about him on all sides, and then all six artists, as well as GREELFORT and MORKAN, start*]

a free fight. The block of marble is knocked over and shattered with a crash; but they fight on regardless. YLANDE retreats from the stage and the dust rises in heavy clouds. It becomes a battle waged with stones and fists, which produce blood and torn hair. Several of the combatants fall motionless and the others fight on over them. They grow blind with fatigue, and, streaming with blood, are hardly able to strike each other. Finally, upon the top of the seventh mountain a light begins to rise, which outlines the crags in black. One of the fighters happens to look up in the midst of the din, and seeing the glow, halts. YLANDE runs in again.

YLANDE. Dorlas! Dorlas! stop! come! It is the seventh mountain on fire! It is there what I seek. Come!

[She runs to DORLAS, who stops fighting. All the others at the same time cease and turn to look at the glow which slowly increases. On the highest pinnacle of the seventh mountain is seen standing a figure with its arms stretched wide apart and its lines cut sharply against a blinding flood of fire. The fighters are thunderstruck. They look at each other wonderingly and then smile foolishly.

As they hesitate SELADOR appears again and

while he speaks the light grows more and more powerful, so that when he ceases it is blinding, and one cannot look at the stage. A storm of golden mist filled with stars also commences to fall, which increases with the light, and in the end makes a seething, swirling sea of impenetrable brilliancy of the entire stage. The artists and the others are completely lost to sight in it.

SELADOR. Your destiny is redeemed, Ylande. After Passion you have found Love and you shall cease to dream with the death of pain, for here is Peace. These others have made a mistake in thinking themselves gods. The true God has not sung, nor danced, nor written, but has knelt age after age upon hard rocks, worshipping with silent lips. His art has not been one with theirs. He has been ugly and dumb, but he is immeasurably greater than any of them, because he has not put out from him his soul in marble or in ink. He has not separated his spirit from himself by transforming it as have they. It has been too great to represent, too large to speak of, and so he has knelt all day worshipping. Their arts are already ruins and senseless ; no one knows what they were ; no one understands them, but the Seventh Artist lives and is deathless. Their arts are dead at their birth, but the one which did not find itself expression has perpetuated itself for ever. The Seventh Art is Love, and Love is the greatest of all the arts.

[The light and storm of haze have now become so brilliant that it is impossible to look at the scene. After a silence filled with the lapping of flames, the golden light is pierced in the centre by a white one in a single blade. Then the haze begins to subside. The yellow light pales and the third scene is disclosed on the top of the seventh mountain.]

SCENE III

From the mist the white light continues to shine and is seen to come from the head of the SEVENTH ARTIST, who stands with outstretched arms, transcendently beautiful. His head is surrounded by a burning mass of hair from which comes the light; his eyes are half closed, his lips half open. At his feet kneel the six artists and GREELFORT, MORKAN and DORLAS, who are reunited into a perfect man. YLANDE and SELADOR are not visible.

As the SEVENTH ARTIST sways in the wind the light fades on his head, and stooping, he kisses each of the worshippers upon the lips. Then, dropping his arms, he sinks to the ground. The light goes out and a ring of wild flowers springs out about his body. The artists and the shepherd clasp each other's hands as they kneel and bow their heads in adoration.

SCENE IV

Suddenly the clock of BOLOCLOTE's castle strikes three and the whole scene vanishes into darkness. Then the light is seen which comes from the vault in the dungeon, but silence reigns above. YLANDE lies asleep upon her pile of straw. The moonlight pours through the window along the flags.

Then the door at the top of the steps is thrown wide and TONREHL appears in the opening. YLANDE lifts herself on her elbow to gaze at him. She starts up without a sound and runs across the dungeon to meet him as he comes down the steps. He clasps her in his arms to kiss her, and turning they climb out of the cell silently.

THE END

THE SUBSTITUTE

A DIALOGUE

TO

MR. W. H.

SCENE

A sheltered path in Central Park toward dusk. There is a bench.

PRISCA MEREDITH.

GONTRAN WRATHE.

THE SUBSTITUTE

THE DIALOGUE

PRISCA *and* GONTRAN *wander in from the right*

GONTRAN. Synonym not symbol; transform thought; X stands for stupidity. They rely entirely upon arrangement; that is a thing apart from form. The crockets on the spire of Nôtre Dame would be of constant worth in a soap-box. Dots could replace them on the line. That is a small power; yet what petty vanity is not courted in that very proportion! They forget even the forms of things as soon as these are placed in a situation; and that is why they bore me.

PRISCA. I thirst for paradox. Justice is only found in occupying oneself with misfortune—that of others.

GONTRAN. No more of the illogical. I have supped enough of unreason in living reasonably.

PRISCA. You were like the hulk of a wave among them. You rounded and they slid as foam across the back of the monster in a scurry of bubbles;

you deepened and they blew into dancing cohorts on your crest. You perused them with elemental measures; why weary of their impertinence? I laughed at Gay; you jerked your head sideways to assume the defensive with a stare, but he lapped it up purring and clung to your sleeve.

GONTRAN. When I go out it is to see honest people.

PRISCA. I prefer dishonest ones; they are the charm of society.

GONTRAN. Society has no charm—it is too associated. Intelligence is the property of the individual and associations sacrifice both. “In union there is force,” perhaps, but no intelligence. Any union—political, intellectual, or moral—is an invocation to bestiality. Government is the godfather of bestiality.

PRISCA. I manage to pick up scraps in society as Lafitte picked up his pin.

GONTRAN. No one has ever used the argument about Lafitte that that pin did not belong to him and that if he kept it he had the quality of a thief.

PRISCA. That is how union kills the mind. Let us forget them. It has been a very becoming day; the air softened so that the sun acknowledged people’s faces as its joy. Everyone was beautiful in it.

GONTRAN. The weather can be very moral.

PRISCA. Shall we rest ? *[They sit down.]*

GONTRAN. Who is Lord Gay ?

PRISCA. A man who wants money. He is amusing, but otherwise unimportant ; he has position. To stroke him is the wholeness of any relationship with him.

GONTRAN. Mrs. Meredith is kind to him.

PRISCA. Father died three months ago.

GONTRAN. Oh !

PRISCA. I wonder who it will be next ?

GONTRAN. As ?

PRISCA. A companion. Jane is one of those women who have never loved, but who demand companionship as music demands air. It is abhorrent to me ; no sooner does one husband die—she wears them out—than she conscribes another. Father was her fourth. She has no feeling about them. They are merely an element necessary to her, which thinning, she looks about for more with no pathos whatever.

GONTRAN. Why are you alone ?

PRISCA. I am forced to be.

GONTRAN. To live alone is the rarest thing on earth. One is never so happy as to be forced to.

PRISCA. Then I shall have to take a substitute.

GONTRAN. For what ?

PRISCA. For—him.

GONTRAN. You mean you will marry ?

PRISCA. Is not that what you meant ?

GONTRAN. No, of course not. I had no idea of your ever marrying.

PRISCA. Why not ?

GONTRAN. Why should you ?

PRISCA. If I loved a man.

GONTRAN. Is it true ?

PRISCA. I have not said so.

GONTRAN. We have been friends all our lives ; you have no right to conceal anything so important from me.

PRISCA. Then why have you had so little curiosity about it ?

GONTRAN. I never imagined your marrying or our relation of friendship changing in any way. We are soldiers of life.

PRISCA. Things cannot go on for ever.

GONTRAN. Then you do love ?

PRISCA. To be honest, I do.

GONTRAN. Oh !

PRISCA. But he does not love me.

GONTRAN. Ah !

PRISCA. That is why I said I should have to take a substitute.

GONTRAN. Why ?

PRISCA. Once having loved, one always loves, and the proper person failing, a manikin is found to replace him. Love is much less personal than we

imagine ; or it disguises the substitute in the image of the real with facility.

GONTRAN. How brutal you are !

PRISCA. Not at all ; merely honest. Have you never kissed a photograph ? There is substitution. Have you never crushed a glove to your heart ? That is substitution. Does not the faun in Debussy's ballet substitute a veil for a nymph ? To actually transfer the sentiment to another person is simply a higher form of substitution and one of less symbolic form. In my case it is consciously done and the substitute assumes the appearance of the other when he is not hidden behind the image of him.

GONTRAN. You are dreadful. What polygamy !

PRISCA. We are all polygamists.

GONTRAN. I am going to watch over you. You need protection.

PRISCA. No, I need love.

GONTRAN. Does the real one not speak ?

PRISCA. He is indifferent.

GONTRAN. May I ask whom you have chosen as the substitute ?

PRISCA. Lord Gay.

GONTRAN. Prisca ! This is going too far. I do not care if you love somebody, but I will not have you playing with that man.

PRISCA. You are jealous !

GONTRAN. I speak for your good.

PRISCA. I have promised to marry him.

GONTRAN. Prisca ! I do not believe you !

PRISCA. What do you wish ?

GONTRAN. It is infamous ! He is a pauper, a dissolute gambler, an adventurer ! You are jumping into inferno ; I will not have it.

PRISCA. You are too late, Gontran. The man I love is as present behind him as behind any other.

[*She gets up.*]

GONTRAN (*rising*). Well, then, I shall marry Jane.

PRISCA (*in surprise*). What !

GONTRAN. She has asked me to marry her.

PRISCA. Gontran !

GONTRAN. If I lose you I might as well marry Jane.

PRISCA. Did she have the effrontery ?

GONTRAN. Is it effrontery to say what you feel ?

PRISCA (*indignantly*). She is impossible ! (*There is an uncomfortable pause. Then she speaks in a different tone.*) Gontran—do not marry Jane.

GONTRAN. Why ?

PRISCA. After her brazenness—your stupidity—I said I did not dare—well, I do. I love you, Gontran ! It is you who have been indifferent and for whom I substituted Lord Gay.

GONTRAN. You love me, Prisca ?

PRISCA. Forgive me—you never loved me—things will go on just the same.

GONTRAN. But I never thought of it before ! If you had only been like Jane !

PRISCA. Must I do it all ? Very well. Mr. Wrathe, will you be so kind as to marry me ?

GONTRAN. Prisca ! Why didn't you say so in the beginning !

[They wander out to the left.]

END OF THE DIALOGUE

.

INVOLUTION

THREE ACTS

TO

MAURICE GRIFFON

In the Play

OWAIN OÄ.

PHILIP OÄ, his father.

MRS. OÄ, his mother.

OSCAR OÄ, his brother.

PAULE OÄ, Oscar's wife.

CLAIRE FAINFALL.

MARY.

A PASSER-BY.

ACT I

The living room of Philip Oä's house in Washington Square.

ACT II

The same as Act I.

ACT III

Owain Oä's room in a cheap lodging-house in the city.

The action is modern and takes place during a winter afternoon in New York.

INVOLUTION

ACT I

THE stage represents a broad and comfortable room with no pretence to style or to period. The woodwork is white and the walls are covered by maroon-coloured Japanese paper. In the middle of the left wall is a door; in the rear one is a long bay window framed by an arch and two columns, and in the right wall near the front is another door. The hangings and coverings are of a deeper shade of maroon than the walls. In the right-hand corner is a grand piano; in the left, a desk, and nearer, on the left, a large table surrounded by armchairs and covered with books. In the bay window is a sofa and before it, in the room, are two sewing tables and several chairs. On the walls are familiar pictures and photographs, and from the windows can be seen the arch in the square.

SCENE I

It is two o'clock in the afternoon. The sun is shining and the room sparkles with newly-finished cleaning. MRS. OÄ, PAULE, CLAIRE, and MARY are arranging great bunches of chrysanthemums and autumn leaves about the room.

CLAIRE. Is he tall?

MRS. OÄ. Taller than Oscar, but he is not so heavy.

CLAIRE. How old is he now ?

MRS. OÄ. Let me see. It is six years since he went away—that was in 1906. Why, he is twenty-seven ! But he must have changed a great deal since then.

PAULE. You must fall in love with him at once, Claire, and keep him with us. You know even I have never seen him.

MRS. OÄ. Of course, Claire shall marry him ! I should be happy to see my boy so near me.

PAULE. That is it ! Claire shall marry Owain. We must arrange it, mother.

CLAIRE. Oh, if he should not like me ! Besides, I may hate him.

PAULE. Not if he is like Oscar. You would be my sister then.

CLAIRE. Then I shall marry him and we will live happily for ever. That is, if he stays here. I should not like to go to St. Petersburg.

MRS. OÄ. We must make home so lovely for him that he will never want to go away, even if he does not marry Claire. I have missed Owain painfully. I shall never forgive myself for having allowed him to go to Russia. But he was so determined that even Philip could not hold out against him.

MARY. The flowers are done, ma'am.

MRS. OÄ. Now, about dinner, Mary ; Owain used to love pot-apple-pie. We will have that and

bring up some cherry bounce as well. The poor boy cannot have tasted his old dishes since he left. I don't know what they eat in Russia ; black bread, no doubt—they are such socialists.

MARY. I've made some of the little cakes, ma'am.

MRS. OÄ. Good—Dear me, I had forgotten them. That is all now, Mary.

[MARY goes out with a basket of twigs and papers.

PAULE (*looking about critically*). I think everything is in order now. Did you put note-paper in his room ?

MRS. OÄ. Yes. Ah ! I must remember to put a volume of Ruskin on his table to-night. He read nothing but Ruskin.

[MRS. OÄ, PAULE and CLAIRE go over to the sewing tables and sitting down busy themselves with needlework.

CLAIRE. Owain was very clever, was he not ?

MRS. OÄ. Always at the head of his class in school and at college. How proud I was of him ! He was a handsome boy, too ; only he held aloof from the others and would never have anything to do with their sports. He cared more for solitude ; yet he won devotion from the more deep-sighted of his comrades and respect from those older than he.

PAULE. How funny of him to have so suddenly decided to go away.

MRS. OÄ. I am afraid we were not very congenial for him. He was very idealistic and imaginative—sensitive, too. I suppose we never understood him, and he became tired of having no one sympathetic to talk to.

PAULE. Oscar says one of Owain's complaints was that he was always criticised.

MRS. OÄ. The family did not leave him alone; he had no room in which to grow. Philip wanted him to do one thing, his uncle another, so he sought independence. I have nothing to begrudge Owain except that he has made me lonely. I was a loving mother, even if I could not help him. He has not written once since he left.

CLAIRE. Was it a quarrel that resolved him to go?

MRS. OÄ. No; he simply said good-bye one day, took scarcely a thing with him—no money, and has supported himself I do not know how since then.

PAULE. He has probably a big surprise for us. With his intelligence, in all these years he must have done wonders in some line. Perhaps he has kept silent in order to burst upon us in his glory.

MRS. OÄ. I do not know. Philip sent him letters to the Ambassador at St. Petersburg, but he never made use of them. No one there ever heard of him so far as we know. He is a peculiar boy, but I do love him and I want him to be honoured.

PAULE. If he is like Oscar everyone will like him. Haven't you a photograph of him ?

MRS. OÄ. Not even that ; we hardly knew where he was—it would have only made him angry to track him. As Philip said, if he wanted none of us there was no use bothering him.

CLAIRE. It is awfully romantic—like Poe. No one ever knew what he did during the years he spent in Europe. Think of how much he will have to tell us ! He must have experienced wonderful adventures in Russia ; for all we know he may have been around the world. I'm sure I shall want to marry him.

PAULE. You mustn't believe the horrid things people used to say about Owain, must she, mother ?

CLAIRE. I never heard anything about him till lately.

MRS. OÄ. Ah, yes ; Owain was indifferent to public opinion, and he used to shock people by perfectly innocent pranks. Those who are really bad are wise enough to hide it ; I think the hypocrisy of our people helped to disgust Owain with them. You have no idea how I admire his character.

PAULE. I am sorry he could not have found us worthy of patience.

CLAIRE. I must be very learned with him.

MRS. OÄ. Ah, me ! Let us hope that the old days will return now, and that I may enter into old age surrounded by my family. I see so little good in disputing over differences of character.

PAULE. I am sure Owain is ready to settle down, for he is a man capable of making himself respected. Oscar has enormous admiration for his opinions.

MRS. OÄ. I shall be very happy. There is so much to do in New York for a man of his kind.

SCENE II

PHILIP and OSCAR *come in from the left*

MRS. OÄ. Are you not going to the office, Philip ?

PHILIP. I wanted to be at home when Owain arrived.

PAULE. And the competition, Oscar ?

OSCAR. I will know the result here. It is too bad that he didn't tell us what train he was coming on so that we could meet him.

MRS. OÄ. In time for tea, I hope. I have ordered his favourite dish for dinner.

PHILIP (*sitting down in an armchair by the table and picking up a paper*). Well, I'm satisfied with the day ; Owain returning, and the affair about the strike working itself out.

PAULE. What are the men going to do ?

PHILIP. They have decided to take time, and in a few days we will have come to an understanding. You see, I am ready to concede some of their demands, but not all, and they are wise enough not to try to tyrannise over me.

CLAIRE. I am so glad. A strike would be a dreadful thing.

PHILIP. Dreadful for us all; the men would suffer terribly, and it would literally ruin my business, just when the tariff question is so delicate and that confounded State Ownership Bill is being so favoured.

PAULE. I do not understand all these methods of protection, one for industries in the tariff, another for labourers in the Union, and now the idea of State ownership coming to render them both useless. It does not seem to me that present institutions lead up to socialism; they are constantly attempting to replace socialism without founding it.

PHILIP. I may be old-fashioned, but I have built up my house on the old system, and I cannot say that I approve of these modern theories of government and of society. Of course, I would not oppose any development, but such radical changes would ruin me, for one. However, the problem in my factory is quiet to-day; we may give ourselves over to the feasting of Owain.

OSCAR (*who has seated himself at the piano with some composition paper*). I am writing a triumphal march for him.

CLAIRE (*jumping up and running to look over his shoulder*). What fun!

PAULE. When will they have decided about the opera, dear?

OSCAR. By four o'clock.

PHILIP. Good luck to you, Oscar. It will be a proud day for me when I go to hear my son's operas at the Metropolitan.

OSCAR. Oh, it will surprise me if I am accepted.

MRS. OÄ. I don't see why! Surely they cannot fail to appreciate your music.

OSCAR. We shall see. By the way, when is the ball?

PAULE. Day after to-morrow. I put it off on account of Owain; I am going to give a lot of dinners for him, so that he shall meet everybody. I am so glad that Claire is here to help me entertain.

MRS. OÄ. Listen! I think I heard the front door.

[They all remain silent.]

PAULE. Yes! Yes! They're coming upstairs.

[She runs to the door and the others rise expectantly.]

I am going to throw my arms around him and kiss him! He will be so surprised! Sh!

[The door opens and MARY appears.]

MARY. It's Mr. Owain, ma'am—Land! Land!

MRS. OÄ. Owain! My dear son!

[OSCAR strikes the opening chords of the march he has been composing and PAULE prepares to throw herself upon OWAIN, when he enters the doorway and stands silently looking in.]

SCENE III

The anticlimax is painful. OWAIN arrests the gaiety and mirth instantly by the extreme bitterness of his expression. He is like a foreboding of evil such as Boecklin might have imagined. OSCAR breaks off the music and they all stand staring at OWAIN.

OWAIN (*moving into the room*). Just the same—all unchanged. (*Looking at PAULE.*) Who is this?

MRS. OÄ. That is Paule—Oscar's wife—your sister-in-law, Owain. Owain, dear, my dear boy! Come and kiss your mother, whom you have not seen for so many years.

[*She goes toward him with her arms out.*

OWAIN. No, no; don't kiss me. (*Looking at CLAIRE.*) Who is this?

PAULE (*nervously*). That is a friend of mine; you are to marry her, you know. It is all planned!

OWAIN. Humph!

[*CLAIRE bites her lips and makes the others feel the more awkward.*

MRS. OÄ (*to break the situation*). But where is your baggage, dear? Let me have Mary show you to your room. You must be very tired and upset with so long a voyage.

OWAIN. I'm not going to stay here; I have taken a room down town. My things are there—what there are of them.

MRS. OÄ and PAULE. Not stay here ?

PHILIP. Oh, come now, Owain, after six years. You ought at least to stay with us ; we have been living for that.

OWAIN. How did you live during the six years ?

[*There is another strained pause.*]

PAULE. You see, we have planned a lot of dinners for you, and I give a ball day after to-morrow.

MRS. OÄ. I have ordered all your favourite dishes, dear, and your room is just as you liked it—even to Ruskin.

CLAIRE. And I came all the way from Philadelphia to amuse you.

OWAIN. I have taken a room down town.

MRS. OÄ. I am so disappointed.

PHILIP. Perhaps he will change his mind. At any rate, let us sit down and talk over all that has happened since he went away.

[*PHILIP reseats himself.*]

OWAIN. I am afraid I cannot stay long. I am engaged for tea.

MRS. OÄ. Not even tea with us ? But I have pot-apple-pie and cherry bounce for you for dinner.

OWAIN. I shall not be here for dinner.

OSCAR. Be a sport, Owain.

OWAIN (*turning from him*). I see you have put a piano in here.

PAULE. Yes, for Oscar.

PHILIP. Tell us about St. Petersburg, Owain. Tell us about Russia.

OWAIN. I would rather not talk about myself.

MRS. OÄ. But you have come back to us ; you must tell us what you have done and thought since we parted. You have hardly written to us ; we are ignorant of everything. I do not even know why you left us, Owain. You must have accomplished great work ; you must have lived enormously ; you must have grown. It would be wrong if we did not want to know all about you.

OWAIN. Your curiosity has been patient. My life has been of no interest to you.

PHILIP. We all thought you were buried in creating some great work, and so we did not bother you.

OWAIN. I have created nothing.

MRS. OÄ. Well, well ; here we have you again, and you shall be happy in your old home, free to do whatever you like.

OWAIN. I return to St. Petersburg in three days.

PHILIP. My dear Owain ! We cannot let you go ; there is no reason why you should go ! If you left us before for any cause, surely we are simple enough to have it out and to destroy it. We will even reform our way of living if it cramps you.

MRS. OÄ. See ! Do not feel any lack of sympathy here, dear. We are all your friends ; we admire you and we love you.

PAULE. There are so many more opportunities for you here than in St. Petersburg ; New York is at your feet if you only command.

OWAIN. My passage is engaged.

OSCAR. Then what did you come back for ?

OWAIN. To see you.

MRS. OÄ. You are cruel to us ; if you love us, you will stay.

OWAIN. I did not say I loved you.

OSCAR. Oh, I say ! We are irritating Owain with this scene. Let him alone ; you know he always has done as he likes, and if we please him instead of nagging him, he may change his mind.

CLAIRE. We must make the best of our time.

OSCAR. Of course. I want Owain's opinion on my work, for one thing. I don't suppose you have heard any of my music, have you, Owain ?

OWAIN. All of it.

OSCAR. No, really ? But how ?

OWAIN. I am familiar with all music as a critic. Everything new that comes out is sent to me.

PAULE. You see ? We are finding out about him in a different way. He is, for one thing, a critic.

PHILIP. And I should think a very able one.

OSCAR. Then you can tell me your criticism of my work.

OWAIN (*seating himself*). If you like. (*There is a short silence.*) You call yourself a modern artist—whatever that is. The truth of it is, Oscar, that I find your music childish and ungoverned. It has no form ; it has neither a law of pattern nor is it a representation of emotion. It says nothing. There is no beauty of sound or solidity of structure

in it; it is as if a child had scrawled on a wall with a dirty stick. I do not know what you intend by it, for you place no limitations upon it.

OSCAR. You are like all the rest of them—of the old school. You do not understand my music; you do not comprehend the argument of modern art. You use a scale utterly inadequate to measure the schools of to-day. They are talking a different language, but they say greater things—that is all. You mistake in judging us by classical work. We have nothing to do with their methods. Look at my work as an invention.

OWAIN. Do you call yourself an artist?

OSCAR. I do.

OWAIN. Then you must conform to the meaning of the word and not attempt to adjust it to yourself. You break the laws of art and you are no longer an artist; you may be something else, but that does not interest me. If you are strong enough to make the word for that something else more powerful than "artist," the world will listen to you. If you are not, you isolate yourself. I have not found your work capable of such a feat.

OSCAR. Surely the chief principle of art is to express oneself—to realise one's spirit. That cannot be done by pounding one's personality into forms made by other men to contain theirs.

OWAIN. A bird expresses itself when it sings; a cat when it meows. Do you call that art? It is, however, a realisation of spirit. You are wrong;

it is form which is art. It is taken for granted that all men have spirit—we do not need to see its proof, but it is not assumed that all men can handle the laws of art. The ability to do this constitutes a man an artist. Those who have been successful have constructed the theories of art, and they can only be changed by the surpassing craft of a genius more powerful than any preceding. To break them is to proclaim oneself immediately not an artist. You err in supposing your spirit worth realising; there are five millions as real as yours in this one city. If each expressed itself as it wished, that would add nothing to art. You have seized upon formless methods of working. I tell you you have nothing to say and your work cannot be called art; you have cast aside all the principles and are creating a new thing. Of what value it is I cannot yet tell. This I know, however, that it is not art and that you are not an artist.

OSCAR. I am an artist. I care nothing for classical methods; but the forms I am creating are more supple than the old.

OWAIN. As you like—that will be seen. It is absurd for you to class yourself with the men who have made art. Call yourself anything you like, only make no pretensions to an assumed name when you are unable to govern assumed forms. In saying that you are an artist, you pretend to a very great title.

CLAIRE. Then at least do not annihilate Oscar.

Give him the credit of being an identity who may, and we all believe will, be great. You do not tolerate him.

OWAIN. Only so long as he calls himself an artist. Otherwise he does not concern the critic. Of course he has an identity. There are millions of them, and he may be great in some way or other—I don't care. Until he shows it, no one else will either.

PAULE. You see, Oscar, he allows you the chance to dazzle the world if you are able to, in your own way.

PHILIP. That is reasonable. If you will not obey the old laws you must enforce your own.

CLAIRE. He does! He has succeeded, he will win. The classics are fast dying; Owain is not a prophet—he is an historian. What do we care what art is? It is a thing of the past. Never mind, Oscar, you are building the present.

OWAIN. Which will be the past. Take care that it is well built or it will fall in ruins. The old laws have stood for several thousand years; your new ones are not strong enough to even resist a breeze.

OSCAR. You will change your opinion. I have firm hopes of placing my new opera on the stage of the Metropolitan, and I have confidence that it will succeed. I am sorry that you do not understand my work; I wanted you to help me and to encourage me.

OWAIN. I can say no good of your work.

OSCAR. Oh, look here; you might at least be polite to me.

OWAIN. It was you who proposed discussing this matter.

OSCAR. You needn't think that I will put up with your disagreeableness just because you are older than I.

MRS. OÄ. Oscar! Oscar! (*standing up*). Come, my dear. Let us go to your studio, where you can play to us. Owain will love your music if he hears you play it.

OSCAR. I won't play to him.

CLAIRE. Then play for me.

MRS. OÄ. But we must not leave Owain this way.

OWAIN (*savagely*). I should prefer it. Go and play. [OSCAR goes out, followed by CLAIRE.]

MRS. OÄ. Owain! Do come and hear him play. (*She looks at him pleadingly. He walks over to the window.*) Come, Philip.

PHILIP. I, too?

MRS. OÄ (*in a low voice*). I don't trust you two together.

[*He gets up and follows Mrs. OÄ. PAULE shakes her head negatively at an inquiring glance from PHILIP, and stays behind. She turns over some books on the table.*]

SCENE IV

OWAIN *turns and sees* PAULE

PAULE. I am sorry that Oscar was rude. He is very sensitive.

OWAIN. Was he rude ?

PAULE. Of course his originality is not to be accepted too hastily, although I myself have great admiration for it.

OWAIN. Why not accept it hastily ?

PAULE. As you said—it is not artistic in the ordinary sense of the word.

OWAIN. What of that ?

PAULE. But it may not be strong.

OWAIN. Nonsense. No one knows if it is strong or not.

PAULE. Then you do not mean what you say ?

OWAIN. I expressed my opinion, but no one knows anything whatever of the value of modern art. As to my argument, that was based on the definition of a word. Do you think it is of any importance whether a man is a Smith or a Jones when it is a question of energy. The word artist is a label, roughly attached to a classification of men, and all classifications of men are outrageous. I was once classified—I know the absurdity of the system.

PAULE. Then why did you let Oscar go with the idea that his work was rubbish and his life useless ?

OWAIN. That is his affair ; I cannot supply him with self-confidence.

PAULE. You are brutal.

OWAIN. That is the privilege of critics. That is why I am one. Critics are not only the most useless members of society, but they are the most pernicious. As connoisseurs or students they can observe the past up to within a hundred years ; they can sort out the good from the bad and compare the great with the little ; they can take a school of painting and show its progress, but their field of action ceases utterly a hundred years before their day. After that the qualities of no things are morally defined by resultant developments and analogy alone serves them. To use that is to err. The force of this method is explained by the fact that all critics have used it. It is really monstrous.

PAULE. How can you then allow yourself to deceive your brother ?

OWAIN. I did not. I told him he was not an orthodox artist, which he knows himself. If he jumps to conclusions or is discouraged because of my poor opinion, he cannot have the vitality to become great. It is a test for him. Besides, I wanted to see him grovel ; it was too simple.

PAULE. It is contemptible to return this way after so long and to be so disagreeable. Why don't you make an effort ? I was ashamed to have Claire see the way you wounded your mother. I stayed

behind just now to try to put you into a better humour. You are impossible.

OWAIN. I am a critic.

PAULE. I do not know the object you have in coming home if you are not fond of your family, but I think you will gain nothing by it. We all had a high opinion of you until you shocked us by the entry you made. You will get into trouble.

OWAIN. Do you think so? My power is in reason; I know as well the results of my moves, before I make them, as does a chess player. When I can amuse myself with a man like Oscar, do you think I fear the outcome of my weightier acts?

PAULE. You think reason omnipotent?

OWAIN. It is.

PAULE. And that you are, therefore, omnipotent?

OWAIN. I am.

PAULE. You are a pigmy; you are encaged in a dark cell. I do not know you, but I know this of you—that there is at least one world of which you are ignorant, and that you will never be great or obtain omnipotence until you enter it. You theorise with dry sticks; you have never entered the doors of life. You have never lived. You have no heart—you do not know what it means to shed tears for the sufferings of others. You are swallowed by self-pity and poisoned with self-love. You argue about reason and evolution—these things are ab-

solutely unimportant; no one cares if there is a reason for life, or if there is a hereafter. Religion, God, philosophy, will-power—those who are born of the world have no time to bother about these things. You call yourself powerful; power such as yours has no value—not even a negative one. It is the power of love which is of value, and the little which you destroy of the works of love is insignificant. You imagine yourself at the wheel of life; you are not. The ship is steered by quite other forces. The intellect is a servant of love, the machinery of the mind is of use only to exercise the powers of love. You accused Oscar of claiming a title not his; I accuse you of assuming a title not yours, for you are not a man and you have no part in the world of men. Oscar is diverging in the development of art away from the old; you are diverging in the development of evolution away from the human race—and you are not strong enough to create something greater than the human race. You will wither. No one will join forces with you. In order to be a god of power one must bathe oneself in human blood and human passion, and one must love for the joy and sorrow of life. It is through that school, where the mind serves the heart, that you could be great. Otherwise the muscle of your brain will be lost. You are ambitious for power; believe me, unless you go for it by the road of unquestioning experience of life, you will not attain it. Unless you seek

some unknown thing, you will disappear. Your path is that of involution.

OWAIN (*staring at her*). I believe you are worth annihilating.

PAULE. I am alive; you cannot annihilate me, for you are not real.

OWAIN. You almost merit recognition. By heaven, you have defied me, and you shall pay for it.

PAULE. Begin!

SCENE V

PHILIP comes in hurriedly

PHILIP. What is it? (PAULE *turns quickly and goes out without speaking*.) What is the matter with Paule? (OWAIN *does not answer*.) Look here, Owain, Oscar is all broken up by what you said, and your mother is having hysterics. I want to know what you mean by coming home and behaving as you have. If you are tired out by the trip, say so, and we will understand, but I for one will not have you so disagreeable.

OWAIN. Have you the hypocrisy to suppose that I have come back to beg your affection? When I went away it was for a reason—I hated you, all of you. You considered me a sort of idiot, a pitiable case of insanity. When I was a baby you meddled

with me and consulted specialists about me ; at the age of four I was handled differently than Oscar or other children. I was kept apart from them and treated to systems of exercises calculated to balance my mind. At kindergarten I was the object of pity or of wonder ; I was an oddity. No one would play with me, I had no friends ; I found means of replacing them by playing with my imagination, and you smiled sadly over the worlds I constructed. Colour and form attracted me, and you humoured me with silks or feathers or bits of glass. When I was mocked, I began to think, and I laid the foundation for the power of reason I now have. Always alone, always avoided, I soon possessed a man's brain, and the opportunities for acquiring knowledge absorbed me until I forgot that I was different from the others. Then suddenly I was conscious that they were beginning to follow after me. I had begun fifteen years ahead of them, though, and I could scorn them. Do you suppose I loved these fools who had derided me and tortured me until they found out that I was as great as they were little ? Do you think their absurd approbation then balanced the years before ? I hated them, and you were of them. You wondered at my intellect, but all the time you looked upon me as peculiar, criticised my every move, tried to deform my life. I was still the half-witted child to you—perhaps the more so for being double-witted. You

treated me as if I were not responsible ; you had no comprehension of my true character. I found no sympathy or understanding here. You either persecuted me or hampered me with insulting fondness. I could not stand it six years ago ; you were in the majority—I hardly knew how to handle my powers, my weapons. You made life hell for me. Your friends made it hell for me, I had no freedom and no respect. You wasted my time, if only in laughing at me or crying out against me. So I left, and you did not bother yourselves to wonder if I went out at twenty-one into the bitterness and danger of life. You would have let me become a murderer ; I didn't. I fought. I won my bread alone. I have lived in poverty, but I have worked. They spoke to me of love and of society ; I found the one a disease and the other a delusion. The only poor are those who do not think. I lived in my mind. You have no conception of the infinity of development possible through analysis alone. I have become a giant. There is no greater power than reason. But I have not become subterranean. I act. I am the master of men ; I rule them with words. I never retreat ; I hate them and I defeat them. They tried to bind me to their standards of prejudices and ignorance. They threatened me with their moral principles and stupid ideas of right and wrong. I have blood in me ; that blood dictated other laws than theirs.

I saw the fundamental truths without the aid of reason. I followed them only to be pelted with the mud of the herd, which stumbled after the lies of tradition. I laughed at their dense and obstinate stupidity while whipping them. I once feared them; I no longer do, for I hate them. I pursue the truth to-day, unmolested, and the cowards accept my dictums as clownishly as they formerly attacked my independence. Am I criticised to-day? Do people interfere with my habits? No; because they are afraid of me, and I despise them for falling on me when they thought me weak, only to fawn on me when they know me strong. They tremble at the power of my reason and shake before that of habit. Even in the face of scientific truth they foster lies. I hate them, and not one shall enter the empire of my spirit; they shall pay dearly for the abuse I received at their hands when I was a child. I once begrudged them the rewards they could give, but I have found nobler ones.

You ask me why I come back? I have come back to measure myself with you. I am curious to compare my strength to-day with that which it was before. I have come back to seek revenge for the impositions of my childhood!

[PHILIP, *who has been nonplussed by the passion of OWAIN, now bursts with fury.*

PHILIP (*raising his hand toward the door*). Leave

this house at once! And never dare to enter it again! Go!

[OWAIN walks cynically toward the door.
PHILIP collapses into an armchair, and
as OWAIN is about to go out, CLAIRE
enters.

SCENE VI

CLAIRE. Mr. Oä! Do come to your mother—
she is breaking her heart because of your strangeness.

OWAIN. Paule said you were to marry me. Don't
begin your courtship by asking favours of me.

[He goes out. OSCAR comes in behind CLAIRE,
who bursts into tears.

OSCAR. Claire! What is the matter?

[CLAIRE turns, and, running to OSCAR, hides
her head on his shoulder. He puts his
arm around her to comfort her, and as she
trembles with sobs, he kisses her. At the
same moment PAULE returns, and sees
them in each other's arms. The curtain
falls.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

The same scene as in the first act, five minutes later.

SCENE I

OSCAR and CLAIRE are helping PHILIP to leave the room, for he is faint with nervous reaction from his excitement. PAULE stands looking out of the window. The other three go out by the door on the right, and a moment later OWAIN comes in again from the left. PAULE turns.

PAULE. I thought you had gone.

OWAIN. I came back to see you ; I wanted to find you alone.

PAULE. You are exacting. I suppose you are opening the campaign before I have time to prepare.

OWAIN. You interest me. I want to see if there is anything more to find in you before I destroy you ; it would be foolish of me to lose by my victory.

PAULE. I am flattered.

OWAIN. You are the first to receive such an honour.

PAULE. My last word to you was "Begin." I am waiting.

OWAIN. Let us be comfortable ; may we not sit down ?

PAULE. Pardon me.

[She offers him a chair, and they seat themselves.]

OWAIN. I am very pained to see a woman of your intelligence leading the sort of life you do ; you are fitted for a better one.

PAULE. I am happy.

OWAIN. You told me that true power is only to be gained through the heart.

PAULE. It is true.

OWAIN. You do not desire power ?

PAULE. If I can do good with it.

OWAIN. Then why do you follow such a selfish life ?

PAULE. I selfish ? I spend all my time trying to make people happy.

OWAIN. Do you call entertaining a means of making people happy ?

PAULE. It gives them the opportunity to know each other.

OWAIN. How many people make new friends or profitable acquaintances at your receptions ? You are mistaken ; your display is merely for the satisfaction of your pride. The parade of society is a brutally cruel weapon ; it stabs the poor by taunting them ; it ruins the middle classes by tempting

them, and it destroys the good in the upper classes by hardening them. There is no moral excuse for extravagance ; and wasting of time, labour, and money for the amusement of the idle is ridiculous. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

PAULE. You really cannot destroy my self-respect, Owain. I belong to a definite articulation of society, and admitting that all articulations of society have their faults, I fulfil my duties in mine.

OWAIN. There ought to be no such thing as articulations of society. The human race is one ; you yourself said that only by dipping oneself in men's blood and living again their passions can one attain greatness. You were right, and that greatness is immeasurable. It is the greatness of the soul, and for the soul's development we should alone toil. All other greatness is vanity.

But you do not know what the soul is—nor do you nourish it. It is simply personality, and personality is individuality, and individuality is the sum total of all the parts of a man. It is made up of his body, his character, and his intellect ; these, in all their complexity, form his spirit, which is the only conception worthy of ranking with that of the evolution of energy. The latter is our biography ; the former is we, and it makes gods of us. That is why all our effort must go to developing our personalities. We do it with the head, through the heart—not with the heart or the head alone, and all the creations of the head, as

well as all the experiences of the heart, are of value only in so far as they contribute to the increasing of individuality. No human activity is an end in itself ; it is a function for the purpose of strengthening our personalities.

You call yourself moral. Look at yourself ; you spoke of articulations of society. My dear friend, all divisions of society into classes, based on material power, is murderous to personality. Your personality is deadened by money ; that of others is deadened by poverty. Neither of you use your intellects with the direction of your hearts. You are not doing your duties. You have no idea of the meaning of socialism. Think of what value you might be—think of what real greatness you might gain if you were not burdened with wealth. Your life is poured into a machine, in which it is given sterile forms day after day. You go on endlessly turning yourself into dinner cards. Your only sensation is in the feeding of your pleasures, and your only thought in how to feed them. If you perform any duties in your family, that is form, and one which every person does.

At present it is very enjoyable—this gay existence ; but there are two things which confront you : the possible loss of your property and the inevitable arrival of old age. You know what both mean. The former would cast you into the streets in a ball gown, unfitted for any work. You would die of starvation, or worse still, be dragged into the

horrors of a life of slavery, only to put starvation off for a little. It is ghastly. Old age is nearly as repulsive. You have no children; the life you have moulded yourself to will slip from your grasp, and the bitterness of solitude, with only your own wrinkled face and empty mind to commune with, will make of your last years a torture. You will have no respect and no love.

But suppose you were aware of the beauty and wonderfulness of personality. Suppose you saw the loveliness of being, instead of doing. Suppose you interested yourself in the personalities of other people; imagine the possibilities of such a thing! The whole world is made up of individuals, and in studying individualism you would learn to know the world—not only to know it, but to love it, and in loving it to make it more beautiful. When you realised your own personality, you would seek those of others, and desire others to be themselves. You would help them to be real spirits; you would free them from the weights they now carry, and show them the way to happiness. This is what Christ meant. If you were bathed in the sweetness of socialism, no disaster could affect you.

But you are hampered by the lies of material classification; you are crushed by money, you find no means to realise yourself. The falsity of the formalities in which you live is too great for you. You do nothing but play, and for that reason someone else must do two men's work. Now, work is

not the purpose of man. He should do no more work than is positively necessary. He should have machines to do his work, and he should be free to think lovely things or to make beautiful objects. No development of personality ever came about through work.

Socialism will make all this possible. People will have no money, and they will need none ; necessities will be supplied by a storehouse of energy which will belong to everybody. Men will be able to busy themselves with invention, discovery, art, and science. They will not fight. They will think about medicine and knowledge. They will think about themselves and the people they love. They will conquer nature and the natural opposers of man. All this can come about simply by the destruction of classes and of money and commerce. There will be no need of government or of laws, for no one will have to steal or commit crimes. All evil is due to money ; all good to personality.

I want you to fight against the restrictions of money and help others to fight against the oppressions of it. You are capable of this. I saw what energy you possess. Do not be ruined by idleness. Develop your personality, for it is the only wealth you own. Turn your individuality to the aid of others.

PAULE. How can you say such beautiful things and do such ugly ones ?

OWAIN. If I used other words with the rest of

the family, it was because they deserved them. I shocked you by some of the things I said to you. You are big enough to look deeper into my phrases than at the form of them. I take no pleasure in purposeless cruelty. If my father needed forceful words to convey my meaning to him, it was because he was too stupid to understand milder ones years ago. They are unintelligent people. You are intelligent. I have to teach them in one way; you are ready for higher instruction. You need stimulation, not the whip, and I am ready to give you the best of my mind. Go over again what I have said to you about the futility of the life you lead, and of the possibilities that Christ's love offers you in opening your heart to the poor in spirit and the poor in fact.

PAULE. You have given me something to think about. You have a purpose then in being apparently so cruel to the others ?

OWAIN. I said so.

PAULE. You aim to develop them—you wish to teach them ?

OWAIN. I do not amuse myself with suffering.

PAULE. I shall have to be alone to think. You have given me exercise too violent for a beginner. It is difficult for me to associate such extremes of character, as I see in you, in one person. I thought you meanly small. I do not know whether I can grasp the broadness of you, if you are sincere in

what you just said. I am beginning to be afraid of you.

OWAIN. Trust me.

PAULE (*hesitatingly*). I—do. At least I am unprejudiced. I could not leap hysterically from one life into another.

OWAIN. Reflect ; let my words take root.

PAULE. It is true that my life has been narrow ; I have never stopped to think. Under any conditions, forgive me if I was aroused by your intended paradox.

OWAIN. If I had thought you blind, I should not have troubled to come back. I am going now.

PAULE. You do not think it best to stay here ? You have been severe with the family ; perhaps a little leniency will not harm them.

OWAIN. Impossible.

PAULE. No ? Then I shall see you again ?

OWAIN. Not again. I shall not come back again.

PAULE. Never ?

OWAIN. No.

PAULE. I do not understand you ; your methods are too intricate for me.

OWAIN. I have not used my own name in Russia. Here is my card.

[*He hands her a card.*]

PAULE. A pseudonym ?

OWAIN. Owain Oä exists only to his family. Good-bye.

PAULE. Good-bye.

[She gives him her hand, which he kisses, and then he leaves her. She passes her fingers over her forehead and moves aimlessly to an armchair. Then she reads the name on the card.]

SCENE II

She starts up and goes toward the door by which OWAIN has disappeared, but, changing her mind, turns to the other. CLAIRE enters suddenly and meets her. She has a newspaper in her hand.

CLAIRE. Oh! Look at this!

PAULE. Claire! Do you know who Owain is?

CLAIRE. What? Are you crazy? Who he is?

PAULE. You remember that he said he was a critic? Well, he has been writing under an assumed name—living under it. Look! There is who Owain is. *(She shows the card to CLAIRE.)* You see he is not such an insignificant ruffian as we were led to think.

CLAIRE. Michka Laptef! Owain? They are one and the same?

PAULE. It appears so; he just gave me that card.

CLAIRE. Oh! then he is doubly awful.

PAULE. What do you mean? Laptef is the

greatest critic of to-day. We ought to be proud ; he is a giant.

CLAIRE. You think so ? Read that.

[*She gives the paper to PAULE.*]

PAULE. An article of his ?

CLAIRE. Yes, and a column of it, every word denouncing the music of Oscar. I have never read so annihilative a criticism before. It is enough to kill any man, even if it were from the pen of an unknown ; from Laptef's it is mortal. To think that he is Oscar's brother, and that he can do such a thing !

PAULE. My dear, you must have seen the reasonableness of Owain's words in talking with Oscar this morning. It is straining things to have criticised him in the paper, but he doubtless knows what he is about. He is not an executioner.

CLAIRE. You defend him ? Why, Oscar is floored by it—and on any other day than this. His opera is to be heard this afternoon ; it can never stand against such a prelude as that—the public will think the criticism public opinion, and the Metropolitan will be afraid to touch it.

PAULE. Nonsense. If Oscar's opera is good, it will be accepted. This is a splendid test for it, and for him. I am confident in both.

CLAIRE. You are heartless, Paule. I tell you Oscar is in despair. He must not know that Laptef is Owain. I think that would be too much.

PAULE. You are silly, Claire. I am sorry that

Oscar is unhappy about this, but it cannot affect the quality of his finished work. We shall see whether that is good or bad ; we must wait.

CLAIRE. Women can wait, but an artist cannot. Don't you want to see Oscar live ? He must have success to live. Creative work absorbs every faculty of a man ; he has no other life than in it. If his work is not loved by other men, he ceases to love it himself, and hating himself, finds no other interest. Why should Oscar struggle needlessly ?

PAULE. It seems to me that you are supporting my husband's cause rather heatedly. Surely I have his interest most at heart. I say I am sorry ; but you are wrong in maligning Owain. His mind is too great to stoop to petty meanness—Laptef is one of the sublimest thinkers, as you know yourself. Do you imagine he would worry Oscar unworthily ? Wait. We shall see what it all means ; he is not a fiend. The awful things he said this morning were mere words ; he delights to shock people and to scandalise them with paradox. You know him as Laptef—I know him as an entirely different Owain than the one who harassed us. It is absurd to tire ourselves out in expostulating over moves which we do not understand. If he is an enemy, it proclaims us inferior. If he is not, it humiliates us.

CLAIRE. You are bewitched by him ; an injury is an injury.

PAULE. Pain is not always immoral. I tell you,

Claire, his mind is beautiful, and his perversities are intentional—he pricks the sluggishness of little people with them. I hated him at first, but I have reasoned and see the tremendousness of his mentality. It is something elemental; it rides over obstruction as a tempest sails over a landscape.

CLAIRE. You are deceiving yourself. Everyone knows that Laptef is cynical and cruel. It is too bad that he has such means to employ his qualities. Philip told me things just now which paint him as a devil. He admitted that he lived only to torture.

PAULE (*laughing*). Claire! How ridiculous that sounds. No sane man would mean it if he said it, and no insane one would say it. You surprise me.

CLAIRE. Philip told me that.

PAULE. Then you both are childish. Owain knows to whom he can safely say such things, for it makes you laughable to repeat them. That is a clever method of undoing small enemies; don't you see?

CLAIRE. Well, it is strange to me that I should be defending Oscar and you Owain. I thought you would be furious.

PAULE. Oscar needs no defence. I am confident in the intentions of Owain.

CLAIRE. I do not understand you.

PAULE. You would if you had a better insight into complex natures.

CLAIRE. Paule! How can you endanger so our mutual trust?

PAULE. As explicably, no doubt, as you have endangered it.

CLAIRE. You are cold.

PAULE. My dear, I am waiting.

[CLAIRE *says nothing, but leaves the room.*

SCENE III

PHILIP *passes* CLAIRE *as he comes in. She disappears without speaking to him*

PHILIP. What is the matter with Claire? Did she show you that unfortunate article?

PAULE. Yes.

PHILIP. Poor Oscar! I almost forget the wretched villainy of Owain in thinking of Oscar. I have never lived through such a scene before; I am not able to cope with such a character.

PAULE. You do not know, father, that Owain is a very great man.

PHILIP. What? A dog that runs away from home, cursing us for our care of him, and comes back to blackmail us all—you call him great?

PAULE. Is not Michka Laptef a great man?

PHILIP. Laptef? I suppose so—a powerful one, at any rate.

PAULE. Owain is Michka Laptef.

[PHILIP *stares at her, astounded.*

PHILIP. Wait a minute—I don't see.

PAULE. We ought to honour him, instead of losing patience with him right away.

PHILIP. You mean to say that Owain wrote that article against Oscar ? The cad—what do I care if he is a great critic ? It is doubly ignoble ; I shall force him to pay for it.

PAULE. Let us keep our heads.

PHILIP. Don't advise me. Not half an hour ago he revealed himself to me as a monster.

PAULE. It is silly of you to talk so.

PHILIP. Silly ? You do not know what he said to me. He threatened me ; he insulted me. I shall not endure his vileness.

PAULE. You do not know him.

PHILIP. I know him too well.

PAULE. A man like Laptef would not stoop to the childishness of acting as Owain did, without a purpose.

PHILIP. I know it ; he has a purpose. He hates us, and he means to ruin us.

PAULE. Nonsense !

PHILIP. You are in the dark, Paule. Do you know nothing of involution ? I heard you use the word yourself. Sade was only an apprentice to this school, for it is involution of the spirit, as well as of the body. It begins with introspection and arrives at reason, but such reason that truth falls before it. Dostoïevsky has called it the subterranean spirit, but the real involutionist is not content with retreating further and further into

himself. He expands inversely—he undoes the work of evolution; he is an active evil, immoral in every sense. You have seen hundreds of people here in New York who have begun to think about themselves; have perhaps lost their illusions through self-indulgence, and then attempt to find out what everything is. They grow conscious and desire to know themselves. They analyse themselves, and analyse everything, until they come to the point where they find that there is no truth, or reality, or fact. Then they begin to lose their balance and reason grows too heavy for their nerves. They become insane. Some go no further than to bury themselves alive in themselves; others come out, armed with a great power to do evil. All of them hate. They call this process involution. Owain, from what I have seen, is the most developed example I know.

PAULE. Owain is not an involutionist. He was here just now and revealed to me a mind of great beauty.

PHILIP. He came back? You mean you received him here?

PAULE. I did, and I find his mentality tremendous. He has conquered the pitfalls of thought.

PHILIP. You must understand, Paule, that he is never to come here again, and you must never see him again. He had some idea in coming back. I am afraid of him for you.

PAULE. I have benefited a great deal by his

words, if only in losing my prejudices against him.

PHILIP. That is what I most regret; I forbid you to see him again, Paule.

PAULE. Don't be absurd. If he cares to see me, I shall be only too glad to let him. I do not see how you can overlook his character, as manifested in his active life, simply because he was rude to us and told you a ridiculous fable. You cannot condemn him on a theory such as that of involution. I tell you I know a side of him that is not even in his books—which you will never see, and I am going to wait calmly his next move. I believe in him.

PHILIP. You are mad. I will not see him molesting Oscar, even if you tolerate it, who are his wife. Claire is more indignant than you.

PAULE. I know it.

PHILIP. If I find him here again I shall whip him. He had better not bother me. I can hardly believe the turn things have taken.

SCENE IV

MRS. OÄ *comes in*

MRS. OÄ. Don't talk so loudly, Philip. (*He snorts, and sits down in one of the armchairs to read.*) Surely I am the one to be most pained by Owain's

strangeness, but I love my boy, and I know he will explain himself.

PAULE. There! And when you know that he is no other than Michka Laptef you will be almost happy?

MRS. OÄ. No! Is it true? Philip! (PHILIP *grunts*.) I was sure there was something we did not know. It may be that it was we who were uncivil this afternoon.

PAULE. At least there is one among you who is not narrow.

MRS. OÄ. Think of that! Owain a great man in so short a time! No wonder he was irritated by our reception of him. I was too surprised myself by his manner to be cordial enough. I shall go to him and try to pacify him.

PHILIP. You stay here. That man does not come into my house again.

MRS. OÄ. Philip, Philip! He is your son.

PHILIP. I disown him. Don't speak to me of him.

MRS. OÄ. You must be patient. Oscar has forgotten already the disagreement he had. Philip—I want to see my family united.

PHILIP. I refuse to discuss the matter.

MRS. OÄ. Well, Paule dear; about the ball.

PAULE. The ball? Oh, I shall not give it.

PHILIP (*throwing down his book*). Not give the ball? Two days off, and you think you can stop it?

MRS. OÄ. Why, the invitations are all accepted.

PAULE. I don't care ; I am not going to give any more balls. It is extravagant and a waste of time.

PHILIP. Are you utterly insane ?

PAULE. No ; I am beginning to see the uselessness of my way of living.

MRS. OÄ. Dear me ! Why, you are indispensable in society.

PAULE. That is why I care to drop out. I am going to devote my money and time to better things.

PHILIP. Good Lord ! Oh, don't mind her, Anne. She will forget it by evening. Go ahead and do as you like about the ball.

PAULE. I will not go to it.

MRS. OÄ. Think of Oscar.

PAULE. He can let Claire entertain for him. I am going to make my stand against the shallowness of society here and now.

[She leaves the room.]

MRS. OÄ. What has gotten into her ? *(Going to PHILIP.)* Philip, dear, be reasonable with Owain.

PHILIP. Go away ; you know nothing about it.

[Mrs. OÄ shakes her head and goes out the door on the left.]

SCENE V

OSCAR comes in

PHILIP. Oscar, Owain came back after I left the room and talked with Paule. I do not like it.

OSCAR. What did he say ?

PHILIP. I do not know ; only Paule has been defending him.

OSCAR. He means what he says, you know. His treatment of me coincides with what he said to you. How could he have deceived Paule ? Does she know everything that has happened ?

PHILIP. Of course. She admires Laptef—says she sees sides of Owain we know nothing about.

OSCAR. What has Owain to do with Laptef ? Unless he is his disciple.

PHILIP. You might as well know that Owain is Laptef.

OSCAR. The devil. Then I have an enemy.

PHILIP. Paule claims that he has a gigantic and beautiful mind.

OSCAR. Why hasn't Paule said anything to me ? She knows I have been hurt by Owain and discouraged by Laptef. She knows I may fail to succeed on account of him. And yet she has not given me one word of encouragement.

PHILIP. I know nothing about women, Oscar, but I advise you to take Paule away immediately.

Don't you see? He has made her admire him somehow, in spite of everything; the next step will be that she will become his pupil. She has renounced society already. She has changed, my boy, and I do not like it. No preventative is too energetic. You know Owain; he has played the devil with you—it would be just like him to do so with Paule. Take her away. It can do no harm. I am afraid of him.

OSCAR. Well, by heaven, I am not. I shall not flee from him.

PHILIP. He is too cunning for you, Oscar. He will act once, but that once will strike at your thread of life if he means harm. I know him; I saw him grow up.

OSCAR. Do you think that I will sneak away to avoid him? No; if he wishes to fight I will meet him; if he bothers Paule, he shall pay for it.

PHILIP. Slowly there! This is no question of honour; it is diplomacy. I merely think it would simplify matters if you take a trip to Canada for a few weeks. You need the rest.

OSCAR. I am quite well. If Paule betrays my trust in her, so much the worse for her. I am not afraid of Owain; I defy him to hurt me.

SCENE VI

MARY *comes to the door*

MARY. There's a man to see you, sir—sent from the Union.

PHILIP. From the Union? What can he have to say at this hour? Let him come.

MARY. Yes, sir.

[She retires, and in her place OWAIN appears.]

PHILIP turns his eyes toward him and starts.

PHILIP. How dare you come back here! I told you never to come back. I forbid the house to you. You have ignored my order once; get out!

OSCAR. You need not think you can see Paule again.

OWAIN. Mary said I came on behalf of the Union; my presence is quite impersonal.

PHILIP. I don't care what it is. As to you and the Union, you have nothing to do with it.

OWAIN. I have this to do with it: that I was delegated by them to bear a message to you.

PHILIP. I don't believe it.

OWAIN. Knowing me as Laptef, they place considerable faith in my words.

PHILIP. Do you mean to say that you have talked with them?

OWAIN. This morning, after you left, your men

held a meeting, under the orders of their Union, and I was called upon to address them. I did so.

PHILIP. Well ?

OWAIN. They have just decided to follow my advice ; they have sent me to speak with you.

PHILIP. What was your advice, and what have you to say ?

OWAIN. Unless their demands are conceded in full and without delay, they will strike.

PHILIP. So that is what you advised them ?

OWAIN. That is what they have resolved.

PHILIP. Well ; you can go back to them and tell them that not a word of their demands shall be conceded, and that they may strike.

OSCAR. But you said you were going to grant them their demands—with a few changes.

PHILIP. I would have, I would have done it, if they had taken more time and thought to it. But, by God, now that they have threatened me and have listened to that bandit (*he shakes his fist at OWAIN*), let them strike ! They shall not gain a jot by it. It will ruin them if it ruins me. I shall not grant them a single clause of their paper, if only because they have hearkened to that hound. Not a step will I yield ; they have made their mistake, the fools ! (*He laughs hysterically.*) You did it intentionally. You have made trouble between my men and me on purpose.

OWAIN. I could not have followed my ideals of justice more closely.

PHILIP. Justice ! You care nothing about the affairs of these men. You wanted to ruin me. You have been plotting against me from the first.

OWAIN. The strike has not yet been declared. You can avert it.

PHILIP. Never ! It would be yielding to you, not to them, and I will never yield to you. It is brilliant of you to have done this ; you could not have taken a sharper step.

OWAIN. It will spoil your business, which can bear no strain at present. It will open the road to State ownership ; it will ruin you. Don't be rash.

PHILIP. You cunning fox ; your plans are diabolical—but I say I will not give in.

OWAIN. Think of the suffering it will cause to the workmen and their families. There will be starvation and exposure and misery. The children will be sick and the women unclothed ; the men will be idle. They must believe in their cause to risk this. You know they are right ; you are not a tyrant ; avoid this war. Bind yourself more firmly to your men. You will be in sympathy with me at last. Be good !

PHILIP. Good ? They are my enemies if they are guided by my enemy, and you are my enemy. I have already opened the battle with you ; you called them to your side, and I open it with them. You are a genius, Owain, but the same blood flows in my veins. I shall never yield. You knew just how

to strike ; I know just how to resist. Go, tell them my decision.

OWAIN. You will throw your family into the streets.

PHILIP (*violently*). Go !

SCENE VII

PAULE *enters*

OWAIN. It is not too late.

PHILIP (*bursting with rage*). Get out of my house !

[PHILIP *falls in the chair at the desk and bends his head on his hand.*]

PAULE (*to OSCAR*). What has happened ?

OSCAR. Owain, whom you so admire, has incited father's men to strike against him.

PAULE. But he could avoid the strike by yielding.

OSCAR. But he won't.

PAULE. They must not strike ; do not let them strike. Do not let him be unwise. It is too mad. Owain is not an enemy—he is acting on principle. There is no good in war. I am a woman, and all women are socialists. Convince him, Oscar. Reason with him.

OSCAR. I am entirely in sympathy with my father, and as soon as you are ready, Paule, we go to Quebec.

PAULE. I have no intention of going to Quebec.

OSCAR. Do you listen to me ?

PAULE (*with sudden coldness*). I shall listen to you, Oscar, when you have justified yourself to me in your work and in your habits. I have no idea what your attitude is toward Claire—but I tell you this, that I have no sympathy for any of you except Mrs. Oä, and that my heart is with your brother and your father's men. I am going to them, to alleviate if I can the suffering which you cause them. You need not be surprised. I have told you already that I was sick of the life you all lead. I am going to reform mine in order to do good to those who need it. Do not bother about me—I have money of my own, fortunately.

OSCAR. You shall not leave this house.

PAULE. You have no more heart than you credit your brother with. It is you who have no heart and no intelligence.

[*She turns and walks to OWAIN.*

OWAIN (*to PHILIP*). One word and you can save yourself.

PHILIP. Go!

OSCAR. Paule!

[PAULE takes OWAIN's arm, and they go out of the room. The curtain falls rapidly.]

ACT III

IN Owain's room. It is a small room on the top floor of an old building. The walls are ungraced with pictures of any sort and are covered with a faded yellow paper. There is only one window, which is on the right in the rear wall. Beside it, on the left, is the door to a closet, and the roof slants down from the middle of the ceiling to the middle of the left wall. In the right wall is a door to the stairs. On the left is a narrow iron bed; below the window is a table, and on the right is a bureau with a mirror. A trunk stands between the window and the closet door. There is a chair before the table.

It is five o'clock in the afternoon following the last Act. There is tea on the table, and a lamp, but it is not altogether dark outside.

SCENE I

OWAIN *is making tea, and a piano is being played below. On the bed is sitting a rough-looking man in shabby clothes. The piano stops.*

THE MAN. Thank God that's ended.

OWAIN (*looking at him narrowly*). You dislike music?

THE MAN. Hate it.

OWAIN. Why?

THE MAN. Useless noise.

OWAIN. Cigarette? [*He offers him his case.*

THE MAN. Thanks. [*He lights a cigarette.*

OWAIN (*after a pause*). Have you ever been afraid?

THE MAN. Never.

OWAIN. Then you have no imagination?

THE MAN. Plenty of it.

OWAIN. Not if you don't know fear.

THE MAN. Oh, I am afraid when—narrow escapes—that sort of thing.

OWAIN. That is not fear. Nervous reaction is not fear; neither is anticipation of danger fear. Real fear is of the imagination and is resistless. You have never been in a panic?

THE MAN. No.

OWAIN. You have no imagination. What do you like?

THE MAN. I once saw a man guillotined. I like accidents—action, anything real.

OWAIN. Ah! What is beauty to you?

THE MAN (*laughing*). Rot. Nothing is worth while except life and excitement. I am not a child; fairy stories are for children. The big things amuse me. I run away from such things as music.

OWAIN. Suppose you saw the full moon; would it not please you?

THE MAN. I'd have to stand it, that's all. There it is, and there's no getting away from it. I can get away from music.

OWAIN. Would you enjoy murdering me ?

THE MAN. No. I like sensation ; there would be none in killing you, because I'm perfectly indifferent to you.

OWAIN. Sensation. You enjoy noise that comes from real things in action. You like to look at real things, and to feel real things, as well as to smell and taste real things. Blood is real ; also the body is real. Motion and sensation.

THE MAN. I'm a chauffeur.

OWAIN. And you speed.

THE MAN. I speak three languages.

OWAIN. Oh, you are intelligent. All sensualists are—and you can argue ; don't begin. I know the defence of sensualism from its roots up. I suppose great men, great scientists, and artists are worthless ?

THE MAN. Pooh ! There are thousands of them. I am practical ; I am alive. I am not a sensualist ; you use words—that doesn't belittle me. You know nothing of life. I am a man, not a dreamer ; I despise thought. It is a disease of the idle, either idle in living or in working. A real man has no time for such indulgences. Thought is more immoral than vice, because it is unnecessary. I have no sympathy for such pleasures. They are unhealthful. Art, beauty, thought, science—there is a handful of dirty habits indulged in more shamefully and pursued more viciously than all the noble functions of real life together. I am not morbid : you thinkers are, for I express myself, and you never

can. I have no imagination; I love situations. I am pure—damn it, you draw me into your rotten habits cleverly. It is because I'm wasting time here that I fall to such a level.

OWAIN. The mind is a disease? Knowledge and reason and invention are maladies?

THE MAN. Wholly. The healthy man scorns them. All the development of the mind is immoral, because it is contrary to evolution. Of course it is enjoyable—this thing you have made; everyone gloats over the joys of thought. To me the nakedness of such lust is shocking. You boast of it. Don't you suppose I can wallow in ideas as blissfully as you? It is a temptation, but I am strong; no analogy to intellect is to be found in all nature, however, and I for one will not pollute myself. You scorn to indulge your body; I scorn to indulge my mind, and I am the purer, because I am of the world and you of the clouds. The sun will dissipate you and nourish me. You subsist on illusions, I on facts.

OWAIN. How have you come to believe this?

THE MAN. Because I am natural and normal.

OWAIN. Don't you see any holes in your argument?

THE MAN. I am a healthy man, descendant of healthy men, and in respecting the laws of nature, as of centuries, I cannot go wrong. Nothing immoral can be done with the body; nothing moral with the mind.

OWAIN. One thing I have to say ; there is no question that the normal life of men is abused, but have you anticipated the future ? You are enjoying life now, you are profiting by it, and it seems sane. But think : some day you will grow old and your body will wither. Then there will be no ears to hear the cheerful roll of life as it toils on fruitfully ; no eyes, to see the action of other men, and no limbs to perform your own. You will feel no thrill when the wind brushes about you, and no madness when passion calls to you ; your mouth will forget that food tastes sweet, and your sensibilities will weary of the excitement of spilled blood or victorious limbs. There is old age, my friend, before you. I have seen it ; I have seen shattered men flickering inside of their shabby bodies, ready to be blown out by a shadow ; I have watched old men falling in the gutters. This very evening I saw one totter in the street and fall at the doors of the cemetery. Death, death ; there is their reward. It flings itself upon you, slowly or suddenly, as it wishes. Old age paralyses your every fibre and sucks the sauce of that power which gives you now such an exultation to live. You do not fear death—you have no imagination. It is horrible. People loathe dead men and kick the dying. Believe it, your course is fast flowing and there are not many years to follow faithfully in the track of your fathers. Glory to-day in the natural morality which you sing. I watched a man like you die ; he died

fearfully. He did not even remember the joy of his youth. He was decayed, while alive still—oh, he was loathsome even to my hardened flesh.

But think. Suppose you had created a world inside of you which was real to you ; suppose you had glittering cities where you could revel after the waning of your health. Suppose you fed yourself on pictures of things you had seen and re-experienced things you had done ; suppose you could recall storms of music and veils of incense to bathe your weakness. Ah ! there would be an inner self to inhabit when the bones no longer bent and the blood lay sluggish ; immoral if you will, this fantasy, yet how gratifying ! Figure to yourself the freedom given to you when you might rest peacefully at home and soar into the east on the feet of your twenty years ! You do not need it now—you are powerful and pulsating with vigour. But wait until the day when you are numb, and you will need it, my friend, as thirst needs water. Build to-day within yourself this private garden, for you shall sorely want it. I tell you your boast is vain, for your eyes do not see over the horizon. I, too, burst with exuberance of life as it can be ; I become drunk with realities and am a practical being, but as surely as I am so strong, as surely shall I fall. I, however, shall fall upon a couch of rose petals, among silken cushions, there to continue my life, while you shall stumble over a scythe blade and pitch your carcass into a sewer, where it will rot

among vipers and stench your children's breath. There is your future ; go, go ! Be profligate. (*He sits down excitedly. The other man bursts into tears and buries his head on the pillow.*) Why, what is the matter ? (*He goes to the man and puts his hand on his shoulder.*) Come ! Don't do that ! I meant nothing. (*He laughs caressingly.*) You must not be affected by what I say.

[*The man lifts his head and looks at OWAIN.*]

THE MAN. I have been blind ; I have had shutters before my eyes ; I have not seen. Yet I was right—if I had gone further. You have lighted the way for me ; you have destroyed nothing, and yet you have added to me. I saw all these things of which you speak, as destructive of manhood—an enemy to nature and to strength. Now you have shown me that it can be a means of continuing strength, and I owe you perhaps another life. No one else ever did so much for me. I am intelligent.

OWAIN. You are a child.

THE MAN. And I love you for what you have said. See, I am grateful.

OWAIN. Don't bother me with your thanks—don't speak to me of love. I want neither.

THE MAN. I am your friend.

OWAIN. Nonsense ! I am not *your* friend ; I don't want your friendship.

THE MAN. Then why have you taken so much trouble over me ?

OWAIN. Trouble ? What I said ? Do you

want to know? Well, then—to make you suffer; simply that I hate you. You had no imagination; I thought it amusing to awaken one, and I have. I had no idea of benefiting you; on the contrary. You have no place for imagination in your character, and it will be a hellish thing for you. Don't bother me.

THE MAN. But it is wealth to me!

OWAIN. Wait and see; it will martyrise you. You will endure tortures that you never dreamed of. Those men you saw guillotined were paralysed beyond fear; they had no imagination. But you now have one, and you will suffer excruciating agonies—Oh, it is not all rose petals and silken pillows. I did not tell you of the terrors hidden under them and lurking about them. Who knows when the knife will fall? Who can describe the panic of solitude where everything is unexplained and the forebodings and mysteries of centuries may burst upon one? What does man know? Practically nothing. The unseen, as compared to the seen, is as infinity to the world; and the unseen evil is more potent than the unseen good. You build up cities to revel in in your old age, but you also create infernos into which you fall as easily. You do not tremble now at the idea of haunted things, nor do you shrink from the isolation of murder-shadowed streets. But you will; you will not cross the threshold of that door before you will start and cast fearful eyes behind you. You are

doomed ! Fate pursues you ; you do not know what, nor do I, but dire things lurk for one, and the eye takes note of them only as they flash away. Look !
[*He points to the window.*]

THE MAN. What ? What is it ?

OWAIN. Did you see nothing ?

THE MAN. I saw nothing.

OWAIN. It is something that haunts us ! I dare not see it.
[*He covers his face with his hands.*]

THE MAN (*shuddering*). This is horrible ; you are mad.

OWAIN. And you spoke of friendship. Fool !

THE MAN. I do ; I am your friend. You need me. I am stronger than you. I can give you something in return.

OWAIN. Do you persist ? I said I hate you ; I hate you all. If I did not, I should not have sown the seeds of misery in you. Go ! You shall be wracked with bitter pleasures and by horrid fears.

THE MAN. You need me ; I want to save you.

OWAIN. Must I use force ? (*In a husked voice.*) Leave me, or I will see that you die in going out of that door.

[*A knock is heard on the door. The stranger quivers with nerves.*]

THE MAN. What is it ?

OWAIN. Do you believe me ?

[*Another knock is heard on the door.*]

THE MAN. What is it ?

OWAIN. Here, go in there while I see.

[He opens the door to the closet and pushes the man in. Closing the door, he goes over to the other and opens it.]

SCENE II

OSCAR comes in

OSCAR. Owain, where is Paule ?

OWAIN. I have seen your wife once since I met her. We talked of the soul. Since I left her at your door her actions are unknown to me.

OSCAR. I don't care what you talked about ; Paule left my house with you.

OWAIN. I left her at your door ; since then I have seen nothing of her.

OSCAR. Don't let us fence ; I want to know where Paule is.

OWAIN (*furiously*). Don't annoy me. I am not a detective, and it is ridiculous of you to speak so. I tell you I have no knowledge whatsoever of Paule.

OSCAR. Now, look here, Owain—there has got to be some explanation of your home-coming. You left us years ago without one and remained utterly hidden from us. You are Laptef ; well, why couldn't you have told us ? My father and

mother devoted years of love and attention to you—no one ever had more care ; and when you acted like a spoiled baby in running away, they let you do as you liked and bore with you. But it is really too much to return when we all expected you to have found yourself, and to act as you have. You were a brute this morning, you broke mother's heart ; you have ruined my father, he will go into bankruptcy ; and you have ruined me. You probably know that my opera was refused this afternoon, and because of you. I have worked hard ; I needed success, and now I'll be damned if I care whether I work again or not. On top of that, you have raised a misunderstanding between me and my wife. She has disappeared ; she has left me. There is not one of us who has not been undone by your return, and I demand an explanation of it.

OWAIN. Do you remember the days at school, when you used to call me Sissy ? Have you forgotten the ridicule and cruelty with which you and your accomplices tortured me ? Do you forget how I used to go miles to avoid you because you taunted me with words a human being cannot endure ? Well, I have not. You were a child—there is nothing more cruel than a child ; you are now a man. I have cultivated some of the cruelty with which you once maltreated me, and you can resort to any means you like to defend yourself. I had none then ; you have every sort now. The

game is not so unequal as it appears. You speak of the love, care, and attention that my parents gave me; these were more horrible to me than your barbarities—they were cynical in their attitude. You at least were sincere. You say they let me run away and bore with me, expecting me to find myself. You know nothing of the dangers I entered. Starvation, imposition, no clothing—these were nothing in comparison to the temptations and dangers I ran into at every step. You must have believed me superhuman to even earn my bread. Moral and intellectual battles were things you never thought of. I had to fight for my spiritual safety, and I won; but I received no help from my family, and I receive no praise now. You take for granted that I should be a man as great as Laptef; you took for granted that I was an imbecile, and that I could go out into the world alone. Well, you have taken too much for granted, and you can begin to think a little. If I had gone under, you would have been justified. I didn't, and it is I who am justified in repaying a little of the hatred which I received. You are a pack of simpletons, with all the conceit and self-assurance of simpletons. It is time someone punished you for your naughtiness.

OSCAR. You cad! You have done yourself all the wrongs you accuse us of; and even if we had abused you, your vengeance is unjust. You have murdered—nothing more nor less.

OWAIN. You can rise from your defeat as easily as I rose from mine. Let me see you proclaim yourself a man. You are a baby. This is only the first of the buffets which you will receive from the hands of the world. I had mine. What is a retarding of success to you? You are young.

OSCAR. My father is not.

OWAIN. Then protect him.

OSCAR. My wife is helpless.

OWAIN. All men's are.

OSCAR. My mother is unused to suffering.

OWAIN. You are a coward.

OSCAR. That shall be recorded. I have certain commands for you: the first is that you use your influence on father's men to end the strike.

OWAIN. They do not want one.

OSCAR. They proclaimed it.

OWAIN. Father forced them to. If he will listen to reason, the strike will end at once. I refuse to argue with him.

OSCAR. Let them modify their demands.

OWAIN. Father has said he will grant nothing. Besides, there is nothing to modify. Do you think Michka Laptef can teach his ideas on justice to the people and then go back on them? You are a fool.

OSCAR. My second order is that you cease to attack my music.

OWAIN. I have never allowed personal prejudice to influence me in my criticisms.

OSCAR. You lie !

OWAIN. Be careful, Oscar ; whatever I say about your or anyone's music is done in accordance with the principles which have given me my position. You are calling me dangerous names. My intention may be to teach you your places, but that intention directs only a minor part of my actions. You overestimate your importance.

OSCAR. You talk very well, but you cannot paint your influence on Paule so plausibly.

OWAIN. I never knew a discussion of social philosophy to badly influence anyone.

OSCAR. By heaven, come to the point and say where Paule is.

OWAIN. I do not know. You annoy me ; please go away.

OSCAR. You are a liar !

OWAIN. Leave this room.

OSCAR. Not until you tell me.

[He strikes OWAIN, who staggers back in astonishment, but recovering, throws himself at OSCAR. They wrestle violently, and then OWAIN trips OSCAR. They fall. At the same moment the door is thrown open, and CLAIRE rushes in.]

SCENE III

CLAIRE. Oscar! Oscar! Stop! (*She seizes OWAIN by the shoulders.*) No, no, you must not kill him! Stop! (*OWAIN lets OSCAR go and stands up. OSCAR rises, and CLAIRE places herself defiantly between them.*) I hate you!

[*She runs to OSCAR and clings to him.*]

OWAIN. Take him to Paule.

OSCAR. Paule! (*laughing*). I don't want to see Paule again; she has not worried about me. It is Claire who has given me the strength of her friendship.

OWAIN. I should think your wife needed your protection against me, from the way you spoke recently.

OSCAR. She can look after herself.

OWAIN. That is the way they treated me.

OSCAR. She has left me; she has proclaimed her liberty and laughed at my troubles. Let her go! Claire is my only friend; Claire values me. Paule can go her way; Claire and I shall go ours.

OWAIN. You intend to run away with Claire?

OSCAR. Claire loves me, and I love her. I have been deserted by my family—my life is ruined. I am assaulted by my brother—and it is Claire who comes to comfort me. Do you suppose I want Paule?

OWAIN. I should not do anything foolish.

OSCAR. Don't advise me ! I am going away with Claire to begin a new life in peace.

CLAIRE. Where he can work without the enmity of his wife and brother. It is shocking the way Oscar has been treated, and if Paule is not woman enough to stand by him in his trouble, I am here to take her place. You have been clever, Owain Oä, but it is the good which wins in the end, and I shall more than make up to Oscar the harm you have done him. As to Paule—I am disappointed in her ; as to Oscar's father—I am disgusted with him. His family has failed him, and I shall give him my life.

OSCAR. I love you, Claire ; you are the only one who has tried to understand me.

CLAIRE. I love you, Oscar.

[They kiss each other.]

SCENE IV

PAULE *appears in the doorway as they speak the last words*

PAULE. This seems hardly the place for your confidences. *[They turn in surprise.]*

OSCAR. I think you are the last person to criticise me. I do not ask an explanation of why you are here.

PAULE. I have come to talk with your brother

about the men whom your father is driving into misery.

OSCAR. Oh ? I do not doubt you have been here with him ever since you left home.

OWAIN. She has just come.

OSCAR. It is quick of you to think of a good excuse. We will be discreet and leave you alone with him.

OWAIN. Don't insult your wife. You may be jealous of her, but incivility is too crude.

OSCAR. Jealous ? Why should I be ? Come, Claire—they have philanthropy to discuss.

PAULE. Don't be such a fool, Claire.

CLAIRE. Your position is not one to permit you to advise me.

OWAIN. Go out of my room, both of you.

OSCAR. There is nothing more to be said. (*To PAULE.*) I am ready for divorce proceedings whenever you care to open them. Claire and I shall live together.

[He takes CLAIRE's arm, and they go out.]

SCENE V

OWAIN. That is the end of them.

PAULE. You see I have come. I listened to you this morning, and I am glad. After you had gone, Claire came to me with your piece in the paper and ran you down ; she was all to comfort Oscar. She had already gone so far as to let him embrace

her. I was hurt by that scene, and when she impudently defended him against you, it only lent you credit. Then Philip came, and was furious to know I had seen you ; Oscar was absurd and talked of taking me away—so that, when Philip acted like a child and allowed the strike to come, I lost all patience with them. I am shocked by the revelation you have given me of your family. They are small, mean people. Oscar is welcome to divorce ; Claire has betrayed me. I have nothing more among them. I never want to see them again. I am happy for the opportunity to so immediately give up the life I was following. That is more than any other man could have given me ; you have saved me from a wicked existence—the uselessness and waste of mine were wicked. I did no good. You have shown me how I can be a real power in the world ; you have made a living person of me. I am reborn in the faculty of knowing life. I owe you everything ; I don't know what I can give in return, but you must see some good in me to have been so willing to teach me. I want to learn more—I wish to be your disciple. I wish to devote my time and my money to helping you carry out the plans and ambitions which you have. I desire to be sent among the poor to encourage them, and to go to the suffering to nurse them. I need direction ; I do not know yet how to proceed. Command me, and I believe that the harvests will be great. I am your apprentice.

OWAIN. I do not need you. I have no ambitions or plans that you can help me in, and I have not the time to tell you what to do. Go away. If you enjoy the pictures of the life I showed you, enter it, but do not ask me to direct you. That is your business. I have mine, and I have not a moment to spare in bothering with that of others. As to learning from me—read my books. I cannot be annoyed by what you call apprenticeship. Go out and practice socialism, I cannot help you.

PAULE. You do not want me to work with you ?

OWAIN. Work with me ? Never.

PAULE. Then why did you stir yourself to talking so earnestly with me this morning ?

OWAIN. I am not responsible for the results of my words. It is nothing to me if you lead one life or another. Only leave me alone.

PAULE. You do not care whether I am good or bad ?

OWAIN. No ! You bother me.

PAULE. Oh, Owain ! See, I have thrown the family aside in order to support your cause. Surely you cannot fail me now. I am alone. I am helpless ; I have let Oscar ruin his life by running away with Claire. He will never be able to rise against that error. Even the public will never forgive him, and it will damn his operas, even if he writes more of them. I don't think he will ; he has not much perseverance, and the same obstinate spite that rules your father governs him. I have allowed him

to fall; I have allowed Claire to undo herself; I have antagonised your father to the point of demolishing his life-work for a mere matter of spite. Your mother will be reduced to doing her own cooking; Mary, your old nurse, may have to be turned out without a penny, and your father's men are going to suffer. All these things I might have prevented if I had not believed in you. I could have opposed you and perhaps saved the whole situation. It is really through me that you have won your point. You owe it to me to hold a hand out to help me. I have been your friend simply because I trusted in the beauty of your mind and the power of it. You see how much I have thought of you. You cannot ignore me. The only way to produce a moral outcome of this affair is to unite our forces. I demand it of you.

OWAIN. You are a clever woman, but you have counted on a cleverer man. Do you think I am deceived by your words? Your whole belief in me, as you call it, was based on pity; you thought it unfair that I should be attacked by the family. You neither care anything for the beauty of my mind nor do you in any way understand it. You pitied me, and thinking me the weaker in the fight, cast your sympathy with me. You say you have allowed the family to go to the devil; you could not have stopped them. You would have gone with them, you know perfectly well, but you were clever enough to see that if I won it would be best

to be my friend. You did not desert them until you saw that I was winning. You have come to ask my support now because you began by pitying me and ended by fearing me. You are not thinking of the poor devils who are striking. You care nothing at heart about the poor and the martyrs whom your wealth grinds down. You simply know that your only safety is in clinging to me and in sapping my life-blood as you sapped Oscar's. You have lived a life of indolent extravagance and wilful cruelty too long to be able to change it on the instant for a noble one. You have done well to blind my family to your true character for so long. You have gotten all that you wished out of them, and so you let them go to the devil. You abuse them to me. You are brilliant, Paule Oä, but I will not see an adventurous woman nourishing herself on the matter of my family and kicking them aside when she sees them punished, in order to be a parasite on their master. I have too much pride for that. You can look elsewhere for prey; I shall see that you never resume your hold on Oscar or on my father. As to me, you have been too bold. I know how to defend myself against spiritual vultures as well as against moral ones. I spurn you. You have played a deep hand, but no hand gets the better of me. Leave me! Go out into the streets and practice the trade for which you are suited. Go out and hunt down some other victim. You have misjudged me! I am not your

sort—you are poison to me. Go! Go! Go! Leave me before I weaken against my conscience and beat you.

PAULE. Owain!

OWAIN. Not another word. There is the door.

PAULE. Owain! Listen to me.

OWAIN. You are horrible.

PAULE. For God's sake be sane, talk like a man, be honest with yourself. I love you!

OWAIN. Ah! You are arming yourself to be the moral vulture now. It will be the material one next.

PAULE. You are mad; it is not pity which draws me to you, it is not fear which led me here. All the rest that you have said is madness, and you know it. You are not well; you are sick with nervousness and too much thought. You need a rest. You have fought too bitterly; you have seen too much truth. It is unbearable—truth. One cannot look upon it. You are weary after a victory which six years have alone gained. You need me. You need the care and love of a woman. You have forgotten what love is. I want you to rest. I love you, Owain! I should not have parted with all those whom I loved if I had not. Oscar, my way of living, Claire, your father—I let them all go simply because I loved you, Owain. I care nothing about the poor; socialism is a dream. I could never think as you tried to show me. I am a woman, and women cannot reason. I caught hold of the

ideas you gave me instinctively, not knowing that I loved you. It has needed the sight of your bared soul and your starved heart to tell me what I feel. You can never hide yourself from me behind your many masks. I have seen the motive force, and I love you. You must take me—take my love. Do what you like with me, but you cannot forbid me to love you. I shall work for you until I die, no matter what you do to me. You do not know what love is, Owain, but I love you! You are life! You are reason! You are truth!

OWAIN. I hate you, I despise you! Do you think I interested myself in you this morning? You were a part of the family, an impertinent part, and I wished your humiliation. I knew that, by winning your admiration, I should sow the seeds for the disintegration of the others, without another step on my part. I was right. I had already done the essentials. When I flattered you the train was in motion, and you have brought it to the end I desired. You have been my tool; I despise you. You have not even the credit of having opposed me. I have done with you; your usefulness is past.

PAULE. I love you!

OWAIN. Love! You cannot love me when I have made a puppet of you, and made you commit all the unpleasant part of my work.

PAULE. I would do murder for you.

OWAIN. You exasperate me. I refuse to argue with you. I tell you once more to leave me.

PAULE. I will never leave you.

OWAIN. There is the door. Go! I am not to be interviewed.

PAULE. I cannot go.

OWAIN. I shall frighten you; I shall hurt you.

PAULE. You cannot frighten me.

OWAIN (*seizing her*). See! I mean what I say. (*She tears herself away from him.*) It is not love that you want, that is why you will not go. I am not a toy. (*He grasps her arm.*) You do not know what pain is. (*He twists her wrist, so that she cries out after a moment of silent endurance.*) Will you go?

PAULE. No, no, no. I love you, Owain.

OWAIN. Say you hate me—say you despise me.

PAULE. No.

OWAIN (*crushing her fingers*). Will you say you hate me?

PAULE. No, no; oh! (*She screams with pain.*) I love you—love——

OWAIN (*throwing her on the floor*). Tell me that you hate me and I will let you go.

PAULE (*crawling to him and taking his hand*). I love you.

OWAIN. You fool!

[*He strikes her, and she falls. He bends over her in an ecstasy of madness, and seizing her head, beats it repeatedly against the floor. Although the first blow stuns her, he frenziedly continues to try to crush*

her skull. Suddenly he drops her and jumps wildly to his feet. He stands for a moment staring at her.

Murder! I have murdered! I have killed! (*He almost screams the words.*) I have killed a woman! (*He laughs fearfully.*) Good God! See what I have done! Send for them! Call the police! I am mad! I am afraid! I shall do myself harm! I am afraid of myself! I am not the master; I have lost the helm!

[*He rushes to the closet door to find the man with whom he talked in the first scene, to send him for the police. He tears open the door. The motion sets swinging a body hanging within. The man has hung himself. OWAIN staggers back and stands staring at the body, petrified. There is a long pause—a pause lasting four or five minutes, so that it seems as if the play had come to an end and the curtain ought to fall. OWAIN continues paralysed, staring at the dead man. Then PAULE stirs her head, and, gradually regaining consciousness, pulls herself into a sitting posture. She drags herself over to OWAIN and feels for his arm. He does not move. She rises to her knees and turns her face up to him. Then he looks down at her, and, gazing at her, bursts into a passion of tears. She pulls his*

head down to hers, and he, taking her in his arms, draws her to him. They kiss each other, and remain so before the dead man for several moments.

OWAIN. You will not die ? You are not going to die ?

PAULE. No, no.

OWAIN. I could not bear to have you die. You are my soul. I love you. I have not known the meaning of love. It is something new. I am ruled ; I am not conscious. My will-power is dead.

PAULE. I am so happy.

OWAIN. Why did you not tell me ? I did not know that love was real. I have never loved. I thought it was different ; I did not know it was so powerful. I did not dream that it was so great.

PAULE. I love you.

OWAIN. I am dead. I must be dead ; and there is a heaven. I thought there was no God ; I could not believe that there was life after death. Perhaps I was wrong. Nothing is known.

PAULE. You are not dead. You have entered life—life is the only heaven. Life is the only reality. Thought is an ornament of life, a fairy legend to beguile our idle hours. Reason is an observation of life—but life is the cause and object of all ideas. To shut out life is to involute. Live, live, Owain. Come and live with life where it bursts into flowers on the slopes, or trembles in sheets of fire beneath the clouds. Let us seek life

in crowded cities and in scattered hamlets. Let us search for it among worried marbles where men have cut it deep ; let us discover it in ourselves and give of it to others. We may bathe in life, Owain, for it is deeper than the sea and broader than the oceans ; we may bask in the rays of its limpidity and drink from the cups of its wine. For me you have opened the gates of life, and I wish to lead you into the infinity of it, where there is no irreality and where there is but truth. Come with me, Owain, and we will dance under radiant leaves, upon warm earth—turned in our joy by currents of fruit-stained light.

OWAIN. Are there such things ? Is there really that world of life ?

PAULE. There is no other world. You come from prisons.

OWAIN. Then let us go.

PAULE. I love you.

OWAIN. Paule !

[He takes her in his arms, and they walk slowly across the room, pass beyond the doorway, and disappear into the night. The curtain falls slowly.]

END OF THE PLAY

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